

Muasher sworn in before King

AMMAN (Petra) — Former Minister of Information Marwan Muasher on Saturday was sworn in as Jordan's ambassador to the United States before his Majesty King Hussein at the Royal Court. Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and Royal Court Chief Awn Khasawneh attended the sworn-in ceremony.



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8 Lebanese mules
killed in shootout
between police,
smugglers

RACHAYA, Lebanon (AFP) — Eight mules were killed in a four-hour shootout Saturday between smugglers and security forces on the Lebanon-Israel-Syria border, police said. Border guards backed up by soldiers swooped on a convoy of 30 mules and smugglers sneaking cigarettes from Israel into Lebanon at dawn when the gunbattle erupted. Two smugglers were arrested, eight mules killed and two mules seized, along with 75 cases of cigarettes, but the rest of the convoy escaped to Chebaa in the south Lebanon border zone occupied by Israel, police said. For years, inhabitants of Chebaa have been smuggling cigarettes and alcohol on the backs of mules between Israel and Lebanon, and sometimes Syria, in the rugged border region at the foot of Mount Hermon.

20 die in Algerian
clashes — FIS

BONN (AFP) — Clashes in northern Algeria killed 17 members of the Algerian security forces, and three "mujahedeen," according to a statement sent to AFP here Saturday by sources close to the banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). In addition, one person was wounded in the mujahedeen camp in Zelboune, during the violence on Wednesday, according to the statement, dated Friday and written in French and Arabic. It gave no further details on the circumstances surrounding the clashes.

Greece rejects
'PKK aid' charge

ATHENS (AFP) — Greece flatly rejected Friday night an accusation by Turkey that Greece had helped Kurdish separatists to acquire sophisticated weaponry. The foreign ministry here said the charge was "baseless" and "far removed from reality." Spokesman Constantinos Bikas said Turkey "believes it is being sabotaged by nearly all the countries which have the misfortune to be its neighbours."

Iran seizes half
tonne of drugs,
arrests 8

TEHRAN (AP) — Law enforcement agents seized a half tonne of drugs and arrested eight smugglers in a central Iranian province this week, the official Islamic Republic News Agency reported Saturday. The agency did not say which type of drugs were confiscated during the arrests in central Yazd province. Agents also arrested five people in northeastern Azerbaijan province this week and confiscated 1.7 kilograms of cocaine, the agency reported. Large drug hauls are common in Iran, which lies along a route used by smugglers in neighbouring Pakistan and Afghanistan to transport drugs such as opium, hashish and heroin to Gulf Arab states and beyond. Drug smugglers face the death penalty under Iranian law.

King condemns all attempts
to reconstruct regional mapBy Francesca Ciriaci
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — From Israel's occupation of east Jerusalem in 1967, to Turkey's military operations in northern Iraq, His Majesty King Hussein on Saturday condemned any attempt "to change the map" of the Middle East region. "I am totally against any attempt to change maps," King Hussein said, expressing "deep concern" over the presence of some 25,000 Turkish troops currently engaged in operations against Kurdish factions on Iraqi national soil.

As for the issue of the Holy City of Jerusalem, the King said the solution should be found outside the boundaries of "anybody's control or anybody's sovereignty."

"Eastern Jerusalem is occupied since 1967," while "western Jerusalem was proclaimed Israel's capital, though not recognised by the majority of countries,

including Jordan," he said. For Jerusalem to become "the symbol of peace between Palestinians and Israelis," the final settlement should envisage "no divisions, no barriers, but just people living together," the King said.

Inter-faith dialogue is also a key to a just and lasting solution to the question of Jerusalem, he said, and for the followers of the three monotheistic religions "the challenge is how to live together in such a small city."

Addressing participants in the first international leadership programme launched here by the United Nations University (UNU) and inaugurating the first UNU branch in the Middle East — the International Leadership Academy (ILA) — the King identified humanity, courage and humility as the most important qualities in a leader.

"Humanity is the way to reach hearts and minds, and to leave an impact on oth-

ers," the King told the 163 young leaders convened here from 65 countries, stressing that a true leader should always consider leaving a legacy behind him/her and trying to set an example for others to follow.

"Trials and tribulations will be worthwhile if we look beyond this very moment and think of leaving a legacy," he said.

"You have a tremendous responsibility, and a tremendous challenge in front of you," he said, calling on the audience of top government officials, high level diplomats, international human rights lawyers, and leading university professors to "bring down the barriers of ignorance and fear and to bridge gaps with understanding."

"What you are trying to achieve comes in line with what we are trying to achieve... to overcome the lack of courage, to look at the other side of the wall, to see what's on the other

side." And, on the other side of "walls and barriers," there are always "human faces," that share the same suffering and the same fears, he said.

The King also addressed the generation gap which, he said, is starting to affect Jordanian youths, who are facing the difficult task of integrating tradition and modernity.

"There is a problem with young people graduating from universities and schools and coming back to their country," the King said, calling on them "not to fear new ideas, be tolerant and never alter in terms of commitment to a better future."

In her capacity as the Chair of the UNU/ILA Advisory Board, Her Majesty Queen Noor was present, with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, at the King's meeting with the UNU/ILA international leadership programme participants.

Speaker of Upper House
resigns for health reasons

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday issued a Royal Decree accepting the resignation of Speaker of the Upper House of Parliament Ahmad Lawzi who had requested to retire for health reasons. In a message to Mr. Lawzi, King Hussein paid tribute to the senator's long service to the nation. "I have known you for many years devoted to the service of the nation, shouldering the responsibility with full confidence and loyalty and have worked among the most honoured people in this country with sincerity and dedication," said King Hussein.

"I recognise in you a loyal companion along the march of development never shirking responsibility and duty and always ready to offer sacrifice. You have always performed your duties in the most exemplary manner and proved to be an example of integrity," noted the King. "Now that you have requested to retire because of your health condition which does not help you to shoulder your responsibilities as Senate speaker, I respect your desire and approve your request so that you can enjoy rest following decades of relentless efforts and prolonged service," the King added.

Concluding his message, the King said that he will always appreciate Mr. Lawzi's services and his sacrifices for the nation. In his letter to the King, Mr. Lawzi said he has been honoured to have worked for the Hashemite Throne since the King assumed his constitutional powers aiming only to serve the nation and the country's leadership. In his letter, Mr. Lawzi said that due to health condition he wished to resign his post and requested that the King approve the resignation. Mr. Lawzi pledged continued loyalty to the Hashemite Throne.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan inspecting water drilling projects in the southern region of the Jordan Valley, Saturday (Photo by Boghos)

Well-being of citizens, dignity
priority #1 — Prince Hassan

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said Saturday that the well-being of Jordanian citizens and their dignity acquire first priority and "we will continue to work together to achieve the development that we seek and to ensure that all Jordanian people lead a dignified life."

The Crown Prince was addressing a meeting held at the Arab Potash Company (APC) attended by representatives of the local community in southern Jordan and a number of ministers. The various needs of the people were aired, with the ministers responding to the queries and providing answers about the government's plans for developing the region.

"All Jordanians are equal in rights, the well-being of all our people in all parts of the country is our major goal," said Prince Hassan during the meeting which was part of a tour in the area of the southern Jordan Valley.

"Improving the quality of life for all Jordanians and ensuring a dignified life for them has always been the objective of our policies and efforts," stressed Prince Hassan. Prince Hassan underlined the need for helping people to move from a position of being covered by the social security network to a position where emphasis should be on productivity and job opportunities, adding that the southern Jordan Valley will be covered by the

social productivity package which aims at improving the quality of life in the less-fortunate parts of the country.

The Crown Prince called for the need to provide the Wadi Araba area with adequate educational and health services noting that the local municipal and village councils must provide plots of land to enable the ministry of culture and youth to build facilities for youth activities. He further urged officials and local community representatives to maintain dialogue for the purpose of coordination of efforts in the development process.

Prince Hassan who was accompanied on the tour by

(Continued on page 7)

U.N. calls on Israel to pay
for Cana shelling damages

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — The United Nations, in an unprecedented move, Saturday called on Israel to pay \$1.7 million in damages for the Israeli shelling of a U.N. compound in Lebanon in which 105 people died.

The U.N. General Assembly's fifth committee, responsible for financing, adopted a resolution in a vote in the early hours of Saturday providing for Israel to pay for the damages arising from the shelling of the U.N. compound at Cana, southern Lebanon, on April 18 last year. A total 107 states voted in favour, while Israel and the United States voted against and three others abstained. The fifth committee normally takes its decisions by consensus.

European delegations attempted to forge a compromise, but the Lebanese delegation insisted a vote on the original resolution.

The U.S. delegation also insisted on a separate vote Saturday on the paragraph stipulating that the damages "shall be borne only by Israel." That vote produced 58 in favour, two against, and 52 abstentions.

A U.S. official said that the

vote constituted "a train wreck, which will be followed by another train wreck in the General Assembly."

The vote is to be validated by a plenary session of the U.N. General Assembly later this month. The assembly invariably confirms committee decisions.

Israeli charge d'affaires David Peleg told AFP that "the Lebanese are shooting themselves in the foot" by pressing for adoption of the resolution. "It will weaken UNIFIL (the U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon)," he said.

The committee decision is part of a resolution focusing on UNIFIL financing, Arab nations at the United Nations, backed by developing states as a whole, insisted that Israel, and not U.N. member states collectively, should pay for the damages totalling \$1,724,618.

Lebanese civilians were sheltering at the Cana camp during Israel's "Grapes of Wrath" operation against Iranian-backed Hizbollah guerrillas in Lebanon.

A U.N. report concluded that the Israeli shelling was probably deliberate. Arab delegates have been further enraged by Israel this

U.S. pressured Lebanon to drop
U.N. action against Israel: official

BEIRUT (AFP) — The United States threatened Lebanon with retaliatory measures if it pushed for a U.N. resolution calling on Israel to pay damages for its steady shelling of a U.N. compound in Lebanon, a Lebanese official said Saturday.

"The U.S. called on Lebanon to freeze the project and made clear that any negative response would have repercussions on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Truce Force in Lebanon (UNTF)," the official told AFP. "The American pressure angered Lebanese authorities who considered this as a dramatic development," said the official who asked not to be named.

But Lebanese Foreign Minister Fayez Bourez gave instructions to the Lebanese delegation to the U.N. to pursue contacts for the adoption of this resolution," he said.

A U.N. investigation said the Israeli bombardment of the Cana base was probably deliberate.

A total 107 states voted in favour of the resolution, while Israel and the U.S. voted against and three others abstained. The fifth committee normally takes its decisions by consensus.

"Often caught between Israeli-Hizbollah confrontations, UNIFIL has so far failed to accomplish its mission because of Israel's refusal to implement U.N. Resolution 425 which calls for its unconditional pullout from south Lebanon."

week as Mr. Peleg wrote to missions urging them to boycott a scheduled meeting Monday to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the occupation by Israel of the Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories.

Mr. Peleg called upon member states "that support the promotion of the peace process through direct negotiations to express this support by not attending the proposed meeting."

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Arafat in Egypt to
discuss peace plan

CAIRO (AFP) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat arrived in Egypt Saturday for talks with President Hosni Mubarak on a new initiative to revive peace talks with Israel.

The two leaders, who last met Wednesday, will study "proposals aimed at resuming Israeli-Palestinian negotiations" which broke off in March when Israel began work on a new settlement in disputed Jerusalem, the official Egyptian news agency MENA said.

Mr. Arafat is to head for Jordan on Sunday to meet King Hussein and "coordinate positions on ways to save the peace process," the Palestinian leader's aide Nabil Abu Rudaina said.

An Egyptian official said Friday there was a new five-point plan on the table involving a freeze in Israeli settlement building to try to end the crisis in peace talks.

Mr. Mubarak and Mr. Arafat "will examine the latest proposals which are aimed at resuming the negotiations in a way to ensure the largest possible understanding between the two sides," the source said, asking not to be named.

He said the five points were:

— Preventing any changes in the status of Jerusalem from now on.

— A halt to settlement projects in the West Bank

Kuwait deputy recovering
after assassination attempt

ADAN (R) — A leading Kuwaiti opposition parliamentarian was recovering in hospital Saturday a day after unidentified gunmen shot him and his wife.

"Thank God Abdullah Al Naibari is doing well," a relative told Reuters.

Gunmen ambushed the car of the fierce government critic Friday as he drove back to Kuwait City from a beach near the southern border with Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Naibari was hit in the jaw and shoulder by bullets while his wife suffered a superficial bullet wound near her left shoulder. Both are being treated at the Adan hospital, south of Kuwait City.

Diplomats said Western embassies in the tiny Gulf Arab state were assessing the

security situation, especially the American and British missions.

William Cohen is due to make his first visit to Kuwait as U.S. defence secretary in mid-June while British Foreign Office Minister Derek Fatchett is expected to come to Kuwait on June 23.

"Each (attack) event is studied in the light of a pattern," said a Western diplomat. "As of yet there appears to be no pattern or indication who was behind the attack."

Diplomats said both visits were expected to take place on schedule.

Officials told Reuters two cars were involved in the attack on Naibari, 61, who underwent surgery late Friday. His vehicle was sprayed with bullets.

U.S. to raise aid sum to Jordan;
Anani holds talks with officialsBy Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi on Saturday welcomed news reports that the Clinton administration has decided to increase its annual aid to the Kingdom by \$100 million.

Dr. Mutawi said that a Jordanian delegation, headed by Deputy Prime Minister Jawad Anani and includes Foreign Minister Fayez Tarawneh, which is visiting Washington is discussing U.S. assistance to the Kingdom.

Dr. Mutawi told the Jordan Times that the King-

dom "is not concerned how the money is arranged. If the United States wants to support the Kingdom economically, we welcome that but where they get the money from is not our concern. It is the U.S. concern."

"How soon the agreement will be signed is not yet determined," he said. He declined to comment on whether the Kingdom has received confirmation from the U.S. administration on the aid increase.

The minister was commenting on news reports which indicated that Jordan and the United States will soon sign a protocol on this issue following the White

House decision to raise the annual aid package.

The reports added that the \$100 million will be deducted from the U.S. foreign aid to Israel and Egypt, but the sum that has been deducted from each country's aid has not been announced.

The U.S. decision followed speculation that the Clinton administration will deduct \$50 million from its \$3 billion annual aid package to Israel.

The issue of increased aid to the Kingdom was discussed during a summit between His Majesty King Hussein and U.S. Pres-

(Continued on page 7)

King to visit S. Arabia; no date set for visit

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In a clear signal of the thaw in relations between Jordan and Saudi Arabia, King Fahd Ben Abdul Aziz has extended an invitation to His Majesty King Hussein to visit Saudi Arabia but no date was fixed for the visit, Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi said Saturday.

Speaking following the weekly cabinet session, Dr. Mutawi told reporters that the invitation was delivered to the King during a meeting with Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal last week.

Dr. Mutawi said the Jordanian side considers the two-day visit by Prince Saud, which focused on bilateral and economic relations, as "fruitful and successful."

He said that Jordan has

explained to the Saudi visitor "the economic hardships the Kingdom faces especially exports process to the Gulf states and the problems which Jordanian trucks face at the Saudi borders."

Dr. Mutawi emphasised that Prince Saud has responded positively to the Jordanian demand and expressed his willingness to convey these requests to his "colleagues and Saudi ministers."

Jordanian exports to Saudi Arabia have jumped from \$70 million in 1995 to almost \$130 million in 1996.

But Jordanian truck-drivers carrying Jordanian agricultural products and other Jordan-made products have complained about the delay at the Saudi borders and checkpoints before they are allowed to cross into the Gulf Kingdom.

Dr. Mutawi said that the

King will start a tour to several European countries next Tuesday. During the tour, the King is expected to address a joint session by Jordanian and French businessmen in the French capital on Thursday.

The minister said that Palestinian President Yasser Arafat was expected to meet with the King in Amman on Sunday where the two leaders were scheduled to discuss recent developments in the peace process.

He said Jordan welcomes any American initiative to reach a breakthrough to the three-month old stalled peace process adding that the King has stressed with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak the importance of the U.S. role in peace-making.

Dr. Mutawi was commenting on news reports that the U.S. administration was working on a five-point plan, with European Union

(EU) envoy Miguel Moratinos, to convince the Palestinians and Israelis to return to the negotiations table.

Dr. Mutawi said that Mr. Arafat was expected to brief the King on the outcomes of recent shuttles by Egyptian envoy Osama Al Baz between Tel Aviv and the Gaza Strip.

The minister told reporters that Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali will head to Tunisia on June 26 to chair, along with his Tunisian counterpart, Hamid Al Qarawi, the Jordanian-Tunisian Higher Committee meetings.

He added that Dr. Majali will visit Egypt next month to attend the Higher Jordanian-Egyptian Committee.

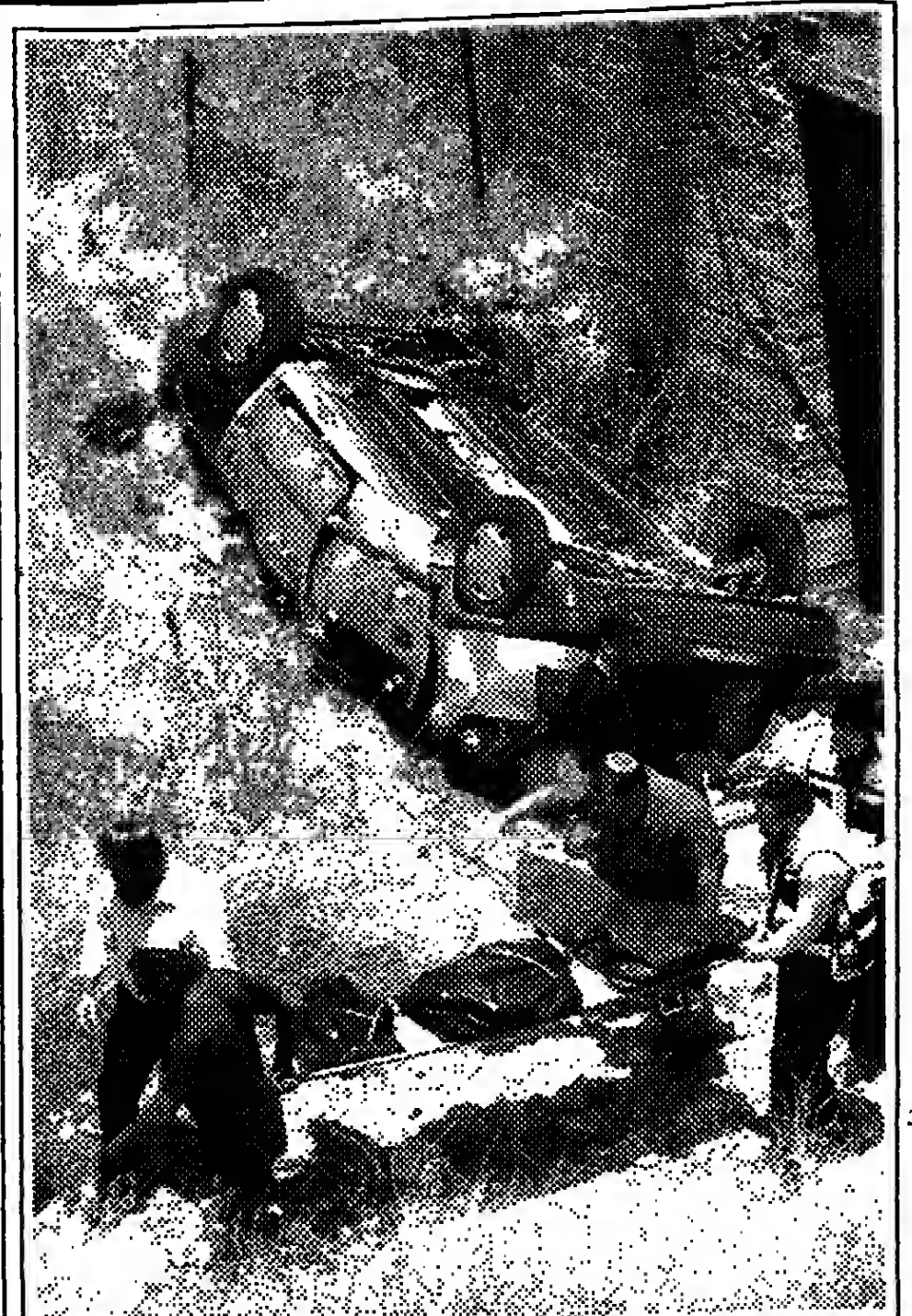
Dr. Mutawi said that Jordan welcomes the election of Ehud Barak as the Labour Party new chief adding that the Kingdom hopes that he will be committed to the peace process.

He said that he hopes that Mr. Barak will adhere to the peace path that has been started by former Israeli Prime Ministers Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres.

During Saturday's meeting, the Cabinet approved an agreement with the European Investment Bank where Jordan will receive an ECU 9 million to finance the renewal of water networks in Sahab, Hashemi and Marka.

The Cabinet also approved the allocation of JD150,000 to finance the "necessary documents to the firms that are willing to implement the Dissi project."

He added that the Cabinet approved as well an understanding memo with Spain where the latter will donate a 40 million peseta to finance the renovation works of the Umayyad Palace in Amman.



CRASH: Religious Jewish rescue workers on Friday carry away the covered body of one of five Israelis who went missing Thursday while travelling through the Jordan Valley in the West Bank to attend a wedding and who died in a traffic accident. The bridegroom, his parents and two friends were found dead in their car at the bottom of a deep roadside ravine after nearly a day of searches by Israeli and Palestinian security forces (Photo by Reuters)

ILO backs arrested Lebanese labour leader

BEIRUT (R) — The International Labour Organisation (ILO) demanded on Friday the release of Lebanese leftist union leader Elias Abou Rizk arrested for claiming to head the country's divided labour movement.

The action by the Geneva-based ILO followed a similar appeal Thursday by Amnesty International which called the fiery, 54-year-old unionist a prisoner of conscience.

ILO envoy Walid Hamdan said he told Prosecutor-General Adnan Addoum that Abou Rizk, arrested on May 30, was the elected representative of Lebanon's General Labour Confederation (CGTL) on the U.N.-affiliated organisation's board and he should be released.

"We say it is wrong to arrest any labour leader because of his union activity. We asked Mr. Addoum to release Abou Rizk immediately," Mr. Hamdan told reporters. Mr. Hamdan is the ILO's senior expert on labour relations for Arab countries.

Mr. Addoum replied that the case would be dropped if the charges of falsely claiming to head the CGTL brought by rival unionist Gheim Al Zoghbi were withdrawn, Mr. Hamdan said.

Mr. Abou Rizk was arrested after CGTL elections in April which produced two leaderships — one headed by him and one by Mr. Zoghbi, who was recognised by the government. Mr. Hamdan said after visiting Mr. Abou Rizk in hospital where he is being held under detention that he was in poor health with high blood pressure and respiratory and urinary tract problems.

Riyadh, Sanaa end press war — Ahmar

DUBAI (AFP) — Yemen and Saudi Arabia have agreed to end their hostile press campaigns against each other, Yemeni parliament speaker Sheikh Abdullah Ahmar said Saturday.

"President Ali Abdullah Saleh has had contact at the highest level with the Saudi leadership and the campaigns have stopped," Sheikh Abdullah told the Emirati daily Al Itihad.

He described the press war as "an error in the current climate and not in the interests of the two countries."

At the end of last month Yemen's press launched an angry anti-Saudi campaign, complaining that its neighbour was deliberately allowing talks over a border dispute to become bogged down.

Yemen also took a swipe at Saudi Arabia over its handling of a visit by Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Iryani, criticising Riyadh's failure to observe the protocol for such visits. Mr. Iryani had accused Saudi Arabia of financing opposition groups which boycotted April general elections in Yemen.

In addition, a Sanaa newspaper said Riyadh had been expelling thousands of Yemeni workers whose papers were not in order and banning imports of fruit and vegetables from Yemen.

The Saudi press, which reflects the official line, retaliated last week by accusing Yemen of using the kingdom as a scapegoat for its political and economic woes.

Saudi Arabia and Yemen were officially reconciled

in 1995 after ties plunged during the 1990-1991 Gulf crisis when Sanaa was accused of backing the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

Despite their reconciliation, the two countries have so far made no headway in negotiations to settle their long-standing border dispute.

Sheikh Ahmar, a powerful tribal chief, said he would continue to work towards a resolution of the border dispute and that he was prepared to visit Saudi Arabia if necessary.

He said that he hopes that Mr. Barak will adhere to the peace path that has been started by former Israeli Prime Ministers Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres.

During Saturday's meeting, the Cabinet approved an agreement with the European Investment Bank where Jordan will receive an ECU 9 million to finance the renewal of water networks in Sahab, Hashemi and Marka.

The Cabinet also approved the allocation of JD150,000 to finance the "necessary documents to the firms that are willing to implement the Dissi project."

He added that the Cabinet approved as well an understanding memo with Spain where the latter will donate a 40 million peseta to finance the renovation works of the Umayyad Palace in Amman.

Palestinian National Authority will supervise private television stations

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) has decided to license and monitor the 23 private TV stations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, a move that filled some owners with concern Saturday about tighter government control of programming.

The private stations are popular among Palestinians for covering local events and in the beginning were an outlet of criticism against Yasser Arafat's government.

The Palestinian cabinet decided in its Friday evening session to form a 12-member committee, led by Information Minister Yasser Abed Rabbo, to issue new licenses to the stations.

Until now, all it took to open a TV station was a letter of approval from the information ministry. Now owners will have to apply for new licenses, and some said they have already been

asked to detail their sources of funding.

A member of the committee, Hani Masri, said the stations would not be asked to submit all programmes to censors. However, owners would be reminded that all programmes that "defame individuals, encourage racism, sectarianism and immorality or hurt religion" are against the law, Mr. Masri said.

Violators face fines or jail terms, as yet unspecified, or could have the station closed down for three days.

"The freedom of opinion will be guaranteed," said Mr. Masri, "but we are calling everybody to maintain national responsibility."

However, some owners expressed concern that new regulations will make it even more difficult to carry dissenting views.

"I cannot broadcast anything critical of the PNA or the President (Arafat)," said Nabigh Breik, who runs Sanabel TV in the West

Bank city of Nablus.

When the Palestinian parliament debated a government auditor's report on official corruption last month, Mr. Breik said, Nablus police initially permitted him to carry excerpts from the session, but then phoned and said they had changed their minds.

Mr. Sanabel's rival in the city, Nablus TV, was forced to write an apology last week for broadcasting an exchange in parliament in which a legislator accused a cabinet minister of dishonesty and then was attacked by one of the minister's bodyguards.

Nablus TV station had run the incident without comment, but was accused of incitement, said director Ayman Nimier.

"There is a political anarchy now," Mr. Nimier said. He said he would welcome tighter regulation if it was intended to encourage, not stifle expression.

Head of OAU says Algeria poll was open but stresses limitations Arab League: Mistakes happen in any elections

ALGIERS (AFP) — The head of an Organisation of African Unity (OAU) observer team that witnessed Algeria's legislative elections said Saturday that the vote, to its eyes, proceeded in all openness.

But Amadou Toumani Touré, at a press conference, stressed that his 70-strong team, including six from South Africa, lacked the numbers to say conclusively that it had been an altogether free and fair poll.

"One has to be realistic," he said. "In Algeria there were 37,586 polling places. I think that, regardless of our goodwill, we have our limits," said Mr. Touré, a former president of Mali.

Separately, a 60-strong Arab League team said that it — like the OAU — had heard complaints of voting irregularities, but its leader Said Kamal, the league's deputy secretary general, refused to give specifics.

"In principle, in any elec-

tion in the world, some mistakes happen," he said, adding that from what the monitors could see, "everything was going well."

Other observers, totalling more than 100 from 30 countries and coordinated by the United Nations electoral assistance secretariat, were expected to come out with conclusions on Sunday.

Thursday's election for the 380-seat National People's Assembly, the first since an Islamist insurgency erupted in 1992, saw the National Democratic Rally (RND) — set up by allies of President Liamine Zoueral — win 115 seats.

Other parties issued allegations of vote-rigging, however, many centring on hard-to-supervise mobile voting stations used for military votes and in rural areas plagued by armed attacks.

Mr. Touré said that from what they saw, the OAU

observers judged that the election had gone ahead "in transparency."

But he added that "three or four" political parties had expressed "reservations" about the conduct of the vote.

They included the main legal Islamist group Movement of Society for Peace (MSP) and the smaller, secular Socialist Forces Front (FFS) and Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD), he said.

Mr. Touré said the complaints — dealing with both mobile and fixed voting places — were passed along by the OAU observers to the appropriate Algerian authority, as specified under national electoral laws.

He did not identify that authority, but an independent commission known as CNISEL is responsible for overseeing the elections. It includes members from various political groups.

"Our mission was not to register complaints, but there were certain parties with which we had contact ... and which expressed their reservations," he said.

In its formal declaration on the election, written in French, the OAU team made reference to the fact that some political parties "from their point of view" had concerns about "certain irregularities."

The rest of the document says the OAU observers — drawn from member states and non-governmental organisations — had free access at all times to polling places, and that the election took place in calm.

The South African contingent of the OAU team comprised two foreign affairs representatives and one each from the Institute for Democracy in South Africa and the parliamentary foreign affairs portfolio committee.

JORDAN TELEVISION
Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:50 Men's final (live from Paris)
19:00 News in French
19:30 Headline News
19:35 Fresh Prince of Bel-Air
20:00 Cinema, Cinema, Cinema
20:30 The Churchills
21:10 Renegade
22:00 News in English
22:30 One West Walkie
23:15 Sisters

PRAYER TIMES

03:51 Fajr
05:25 (Sunrise) Duha
12:34 Dhuhr
16:15 Asr
19:44 Maghreb
21:18 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweileh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366
Anglican Church Tel. 652826

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 827126
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295
English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 19/33
Aqaba 24/39
Deserts 17/38
Jordan Valley 23/39

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 31, Aqaba 37 Humidity readings: Amman 25 per cent, Aqaba 27 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Hanna Mansour 750197
Dr. Azzam Shukri 898863
Dr. Nidal Al Dahleh 827195
Dr. Sa'ad Tawfiq 788285
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Naloukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 847632
IRBID:
Dr. Zakariya Malkawi 218615
Al Quds pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Ratib Atallah 994424
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES
Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192 621111 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Dept 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water & Sewage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Tel. Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100

J. Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Co. 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS
AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 81381332
Khalidi Maternity 64428116
Aklieh Maternity 64244172
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musasher Hospital 6672279
The Islamic, Abdali 66612637
Al-Abi, Abdali 6641646
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 7771013
Al-Bashir 77511126
Army, Marka 89161115
Queen Alia Hospital 60224030
Amal Hospital 674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199
ZARQA:
Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)909990

IRBID: Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272755
Ibn Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone 08 (52700)

ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
09:30 Jeddah (RJ)
10:00 Bombay (RJ)
10:05 Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)
10:15 Lamaca (RJ)

DEPARTURES
06:45 Beirut (RJ)
07:00 Lamaca (RJ)
10:25 Frankfurt (RJ)
12:00 Tunis (RJ)
12:15 Ankara, Istanbul (RJ)
12:30 Athens, Vienna (RJ)
12:30 Rome (RJ)
12:40 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
13:25 London (RJ)
21:00 New Delhi (RJ)
21:10 Cairo (RJ)
21:25 Jeddah (RJ)
21:40 Damascus (RJ)
22:25 Singapore, Jakarta (RJ)
22:40 Bangkok (RJ)
23:00 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
23:45 Sanaa (RJ)

Other Flights
12:00 Sanaa (TY)
12:00 Jeddah (SV)
13:35 Bahrain (GF)
15:20 Moscow (SU)
21:10 Beirut (ME)
21:35 Cairo (MS)
23:20 Istanbul (TK)
00:59 Cairo (MS)
02:15 London (BA)
07:20 London (BA)
07:20 Tel Aviv (LY)

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
06:45 Beirut (RJ)
07:00 Lamaca (RJ)
10:25 Frankfurt (RJ)
12:00 Tunis (RJ)
12:15 Ankara, Istanbul (RJ)
12:30 Athens, Vienna (RJ)
12:30 Rome (RJ)
12:40 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
13:25 London (RJ)
21:00 New Delhi (RJ)
21:10 Cairo (RJ)
21:25 Jeddah (RJ)
21:40 Damascus (RJ)
22:25 Singapore, Jakarta (RJ)
22:40 Bangkok (RJ)
23:00 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
23:45 Sanaa (RJ)



Women from Jordan's northern governorates Saturday attend a workshop designed to prepare them for participating in the fall elections (Petra photo)

Workshops prepare women for fall elections

IRBID (J.T.) — Hoping to help women better prepare for parliamentary life and take active participation in the fall elections, Jordanian women's groups Saturday began a series of related workshops and seminars.

A workshop on "Empowerment of Jordanian Women in Leadership and Decision-making" began in Irbid. Organized by the Jordanian National Committee for Women (JNCW) these and other activities are being conducted in conjunction with the Jordanian National Forum for Women (JNFOW) and the Prince Basma Women's Resource Centre (PBWRC) as well as the European Union (EU).

The Irbid workshop was attended by 70 women

from Irbid, Mafrag, Jerash and Ajloun governorates.

It is one of a series of activities scheduled to be held in various governorates.

Today, a seminar for women will be held in Maan on "Legislation Concerning Jordanian Women and the Democratic Process."

JNCW Secretary Randa Hindawi addressed the Irbid meeting and focused on election campaigns, the election law and its major provisions.

Ms. Hindawi reviewed the various stages of the election process including preparation of voters lists, nomination of candidates, electioneering, casting of ballots and vote-counting.

She also explained the division of voting districts and the parliamentary seats assigned for each of them.

May Abul Samen, head of the training department at the JNCW, discussed the role of women in politics, ways to augment that role through efficiency and experience, how to change negative attitudes towards women, and ways to provide material and moral support for women candidates.

Ms. Abul Samen discussed election campaigns, the importance of forming teams of volunteers to support women candidates, getting the candidates' messages to the public, and encouraging citizens to vote.

15 Israeli witnesses to be subpoenaed in Dakamseh trial — prosecutor

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Fifteen Israeli witnesses are expected to testify next Monday in the murder trial of Ahmad Dakamseh, prompting four defence attorneys Saturday to drop the case.

Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Hijazi told reporters following the conclusion of a four-hour court session Saturday that he plans to subpoena Israeli witnesses including six doctors, six schoolgirls, a teacher, a bus driver and an escort.

Dakamseh, a Jordanian soldier, is on trial accused of gunning down seven

Israeli schoolgirls in the northern border area of Baqoura.

Defence Attorney Ahmad Najdawi announced during the court session yesterday that he and three other attorneys were withdrawing from the case because the prosecution intends to summon Israeli witnesses.

"The prosecution's insistence on summoning the Israeli witnesses does not agree with our legal or moral convictions and contradicts with our society's attitudes which reject normalisation with Israel," Attorney Najdawi said.

Mr. Najdawi, who walked out of the courtroom immediately after announcing his

withdrawal from the trial, added that he and his original team do not agree with the defence's plan.

Mr. Najdawi had volunteered to defend Corp. Dakamseh and was the main attorney, but during the first court session, the defendant requested to appoint former deputy and head of the Jordan Bar Association (JBA) Hussein Mjalli as the head of the nine-member defence team instead of Mr. Najdawi.

During Saturday's session, the court, held at a heavily-guarded army base in Naour, 30 kilometres from Amman, heard eight prosecution witnesses, including two doctors and five soldiers.

Corp. Abdul Salam Mohammad, 24, said Corp. Dakamseh told him one night before the shooting incident that he had bid a last farewell to his family, while he was on his last home leave.

"He also told me that he was going to die and not return home," Corp. Mohammad told the military tribunal.

First Sergeant Yousef Abdullah Yousef, 30, testified that the defendant used to peer at Israeli girls visiting the area through binoculars and used to make lewd remarks.

A third witness, Corp. Bassam Musa, 30, said when Corp. Dakamseh was

overpowered by other soldiers after his M-16 jammed on the morning of the incident, "he told us 'I killed the girls because tomorrow they will grow up.'"

After his arrest Corp. Dakamseh had told a three-member military committee that he had not planned the attack, and that he shot the Israeli girls "out of a sense of national dignity and to protect his military honour."

The defendant claimed that he was provoked by the loud laughter of the Israeli schoolgirls at seeing him performing his prayers.

UNRWA donors, host countries to discuss \$50m agency deficit

AMMAN (J.T.) — Representatives of 27 donor countries and Arab states hosting Palestinian refugees will meet here Tuesday to discuss the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), its 1997 budget and the estimated \$50 deficit facing the agency and threatening the delivery of its services to Palestinian refugees.

UNRWA Commissioner General Peter Hansen is expected to attend the meeting and deliver an address outlining the agency's financial situation.

Last month, during his trip to Copenhagen, Geneva, and London, Mr. Hansen had said that the deficit could mean that the agency would soon be forced to reduce or suspend some of its services unless additional contributions were received.

According to Ibrahim Tarshih, director of the Palestinian Affairs Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, recent UNRWA statistics show

that Jordan hosts the largest part (nearly 40 per cent) of refugees of all the host states.

Thus, he said, the major part of services to refugee camps is provided by the Kingdom.

But he pointed out that of UNRWA's \$360 million annual budget, the agency spends only \$76 million on the camps in Jordan.

The Kingdom's own annual budget allocates \$300 million to provide infrastructure, health, education and social services to the estimated 225,000 Palestinians living in the 13 refugee camps in Jordan.

He also noted that refugee students are offered education not only in UNRWA's schools but also in government institutions pointing out that 80 per cent of the registered refugees in Jordan live outside the 13 camps.

Mr. Tarshih stressed that Jordan demands that UNRWA continue to provide services to the refugees in all its fields of operations until a final and just solution has been found



Palestinian refugees from a United Nations Relief and Works Agency-supported camp (UNRWA photo)

to the Palestinian refugee problem.

Referring to the government's recent allocation of

JD 173 million for the improvement of the camps' infrastructure over the next three years, Mr. Tarshih

said that this endeavour will add to Jordan's contributions to the well-being of residents of the camps.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Yugoslav premier arrives today

AMMAN (Petra) — Yugoslav Deputy Prime Minister Nicholaj Shainovich arrives here today heading an official delegation. The team will hold talks with senior Jordanian officials. Mr. Shainovich will convey a message to his Majesty King Hussein from the Yugoslav president.

Majali appoints office director

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Saturday appointed Mamoun Nour Addin as the prime minister's office director as of June 8. Mr. Nour Addin worked as Al Hussein Youth City director.

PSD pledges support to PNA police

AMMAN (Petra) — Public Security

Department (PSD) Director Nasouh Muheiddin Saturday stressed that Arab security is indivisible and integrated. Speaking at a reception ceremony of Palestinian traffic police delegation, Gen. Muheiddin said that upon directives from His Majesty King Hussein, the PSD will exert all efforts to provide every assistance to the Palestinian police.

Martyrs' families to receive JD50

AMMAN (Petra) — The board of the Public Security Department Martyrs Fund Saturday approved the distribution of JD 50 to the families of PSD martyrs. The board took this decision on the occasion of Army Day and the anniversary of the Great Arab Revolt.

WHAT'S GOING ON

PLAY

* "Jadara Shines Anew" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

FILM

* Video film "Cairo Tapestry" by Paul Rinaldi at the Royal Society of Fine Arts, Jabal Weibdeh at 6:00 p.m. (Tel. 651-119)

LECTURE

* Interfaith Work and Jewish-Christian-Muslim Relations" at the Royal Institute for Interfaith Studies, Jabal Amman, Fourth Circle at 6:00 p.m. (Tel. 618051/2).

Americans return from humanitarian mission to Iraq, confirm deteriorating situation

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — An U.S. Gulf war veteran and three other Americans returned to Amman yesterday from a humanitarian mission to Iraq, reconfirming the often told stories of misery emanating from that country.

The four, members of "Voices in the Wilderness," a campaign to end the U.S.-backed economic sanctions imposed by the United Nations on Iraq at the outset of the Gulf crisis, entered Iraq more than one week ago to deliver \$15,000 worth of medical supplies — mostly anti-cancer drugs — to doctors in Iraq.

The veteran, 26-year old Erik Gustafson — now a student at the University of Wisconsin at

Madison — joined the movement to "confront" what he called "dishonesty of American officials" with regard to the war itself during which hundreds of Iraqi civilians died, the use of depleted uranium ammunition during the war and the devastating effects of several years of sanctions on the civilian population of Iraq, particularly children.

He is the first veteran to visit Iraq on a humanitarian mission since the end of the war.

"Five years after I returned from the Gulf, I realised that the war is not over," said Mr. Gustafson, who was a member of an army engineering battalion responsible for building roads, camps and hospitals during the war.

"Our government has

not been forthcoming in documenting the effects of the sanctions or the use of depleted uranium shells," he said.

"I am disturbed by the images I have of children dying from preventable diseases and diseases caused by the use of depleted uranium ammunition."

Mr. Gustafson said he also has friends in the U.S. who suffer from the mysterious Gulf War Syndrome, an issue on which the U.S. government has remained largely silent.

"With all due respect to those who are suffering, the things I saw in Iraq are 10 times worse than what we are seeing in the U.S.," he said. "Therefore, I want to confront the (U.S.) government on this issue."

The group criticises the

"oil-for-food" deal — also known as U.N. Security Council Resolution 986, which allows Iraq to sell \$2 billion worth of crude oil every six months in order to purchase desperately needed food and medicine — as "too little, too late" for Iraqis.

The complete breakdown in water sanitation systems has led to severe wasting among the population, especially among children in poorer neighbourhoods, who, they said, literally play in sewage.

"We can bring all the food we want to Iraq," said Mike Miles, a substitute teacher and farmer from Midwest America. "But that doesn't really matter: it will not stop wasting and dysentery. Only clean water can do that."

The World Health Organisation has reported that deaths related to diarrhoeal diseases have tripled, and diseases related to lack of access to clean water and poor or nonexistent sanitation facilities have skyrocketed.

The U.N.'s Food and Agricultural Organisation reports that nearly 12 per cent of children in Baghdad are wasted, 28 per cent stunted and 29 per cent are underweight.

"There is nothing left of Iraqi hospitals," he said. "The situation has deteriorated to the point that, in the hospitals we visited, we saw doctors using the backs of medical records from the early 1970s as medical charts for their patients. They can't even get paper."

The group admits that

\$60,000 is barely a drop in the ocean, said Barbara Lubin of the Middle East Children's Alliance, a Berkeley, California-based NGO. "But as American citizens, we feel ashamed of what is happening, and this is what we can do to help and to keep the issue on the public agenda."

The foursome is the sixth delegation to Iraq from the "Voices" rank since March 1996.

They estimate that, to date, the organisation has brought nearly \$60,000 in medical aid to Iraq, in contravention of U.N. sanctions and U.S. federal law.

Violation of the U.S. law can bring a penalty of up to 12 years in prison, \$1 million in fines and a civil penalty up to \$250,000.

Opposition parties appeal to Arab leaders to help 'stop Turkish aggression on Iraq'

AMMAN (J.T.) — Eleven opposition political parties Saturday appealed to Arab heads of state to take collective action to halt "Turkey's continued aggression on Iraq and about the ambitious designs of the Turkish-Israeli alliance."

In an open message addressed to Arab leaders, the parties referred to what they called the danger of the Turkish occupation of parts of northern Iraq which, they said, is backed by the United States and Israel.

"At a time when the Arab and Islamic nation is facing the Zionists' occupation of Arab lands and danger posed to the holy shrines, and while the Israelis continue their judaisation

process of the holy places, disregarding the Arab and Islamic nation's feelings and international laws and norms, the Turkish armed forces carry out an invasion of northern Iraq, violating that country's sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as the U.N. Charter and international laws, and endangering the Arab nation's security," said the appeal.

"This U.S.-Israeli backed aggression is designed to encircle Syria and exercise pressure on this country militarily and politically in a desperate attempt to force it to accept conditions dictated by the U.S. and Israel and to impose U.S.-Zionist hegemony on the Arab region politically and economically and to pillage the

Arab nation's wealth," the appeal added.

It said that the Jordanian opposition political parties call on the Arab leaders:

1. To stand firm in the face of the Turkish aggression on Iraq and secure the withdrawal of the invaders.

2. To act collectively to confront the Turkish-Zionist alliance and to abort its designs and protect the Arab nation.

3. To restore normal relations among the Arab states and create a genuine climate of solidarity among the Arab countries, and

4. To live up to the expectations of the Arab masses who look up to their leaders with hope to save them from conspiracies hatched by the enemies of the Arab nation.

Police arrest 70-year-old suspect in drug smuggling round-up

AMMAN (Petra) — The Anti-narcotics Department Saturday announced that it arrested four people, one of them 70-years-old, in connection with a smuggling attempt last week.

Authorities said they seized 205 kilograms of hashish valued at JD 500,000 in a sting operation helped by a tip-off from Syrian authorities.

Department Director Nazih Shreideh said that the four suspects were caught trying to smuggle the illicit drugs into Jordan from a neighbouring country, but was not more specific.

Col. Shreideh said the arrest follows a long period of surveillance of the suspects on both sides of the border.

According to police, the four persons arrested include three Jordanians.

The 70-year-old suspect, authorities said, has a police record and is considered one of the most dangerous drug traffickers in the region. Police did not reveal the suspect's nationality.

ACC staff start efficiency training

AMMAN (Petra) — Twenty Agricultural Credit Corporation (ACC) employees Saturday began a training seminar at the Institute of Banking Studies (IBS) as part of a general plan to upgrade ACC staff efficiency.

ACC Director General Nimer Nabulsi said in an address at the first session of the six-day seminar that the corporation is implementing a government plan to promote the function of the public administration system to face present and future requirements.

Lecturers will tackle issues related to administrative affairs. ACC topics, principles and rules for granting credit and public service and communications skills.

Jordan, Syria to consider joint industries

DAMASCUS (J.T.) — Jordan and Syria Saturday said they would start joint industrial projects to produce commodities for local needs and export any surplus.

At a meeting in Damascus between Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Hani Mulki and Syrian Minister of Foreign Trade and Economy Mohammad Imadi, the two countries said they would invite private sector industrial and trade concerns to Amman next month to study the proposed joint projects.

Should the projects prove feasible, they will be carried out at the Jordan-Syria Industrial Free Zone Company located on the border between the two countries.

The zone was established in 1987 to offer incentives to Arab and foreign investors to establish industrial businesses.

Dr. Mulki was in Damascus to co-chair the general assembly meeting of the Jordan-Syria Industrial Free Zone Company with his Syrian counterpart.

Afghan Taleban reportedly take key town near Kabul

ISLAMABAD (R) — Afghanistan's Taleban militia said it had recaptured a strategic town north of the capital Kabul Saturday and was advancing further in an apparent move to clear the main highway to the north.

Taleban sources, quoted by a Pakistan-based Afghan news service, said the militia took Jhal Os-Siraj, 70 kilometres from Kabul, in an early morning offensive against opposition forces.

There was no independent confirmation of the report. The Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) said the Taleban launched the offensive with 2,000 fighters, tanks and jet bombers pushing forces led by renowned opposition guerrilla commander Ahmad Shah Masood from the town on Kabul's main highway to the north after a four-hour battle.

It quoted a Taleban spokesman, Abdul Wakil, in the southern Afghan town of Kandahar saying the militia forces were now advancing towards the mouth of Masood's native Panjsher Valley stronghold and fighting to recapture another strategic town, Gorbahar, which the Taleban recently lost to the opposition.

Jhal Os-Siraj controls access to the Salang Highway that leads to the north over the towering Hindu Kush Mountains.

The report of the Taleban advance comes after a flurry of diplomatic activity by Afghanistan's neighbours.

Russian deputy foreign minister, Viktor Pasuvalyuk, arrived in Islamabad Friday night, and was due to hold talks with Pakistani authorities during which Afghan developments were likely to be high on the agenda.

Turkmenistan's Foreign Minister Boris Shikhrmuradov was also due to arrive in Islamabad Saturday for talks likely to focus on Afghanistan.

An Iranian deputy foreign minister, Alaeddin Boroujerdi, met Uzbek opposition leader General Abdul Malik in the northern Afghan city of Mazar-i-Sharif Friday, a day after meeting ousted President Burhanuddin Rabbani in the opposition-held northeastern town of Faizabad, AIP said. Commander Masood's forces had captured both Gorbahar, at the entrance to the Panjsher Valley, and Jhal Os-Siraj last week, cutting off a Taleban force based in Pul-i-Khumri, further north in Baghlan province. The Taleban were also ousted from the newly taken main northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif by Mr. Malik's forces.

The use of tanks and other heavy arms in Saturday's battle was made possible after the Taleban repaired a bridge at Matak between Jhal Os-Siraj and Charikar, south of there, that had been blown up by Commander Masood's forces, AIP said.

Taleban sources said about 45 opposition fighters and

only three Taleban were killed in Saturday's battle.

On Friday, AIP quoted Taleban sources as saying the militia had repulsed a big attack on the border between Baghlan and Samangan provinces launched by forces commanded by Malik.

The Taleban, which controls most of Baghlan province and some of Samangan, killed 11 opposition soldiers and captured 55, while five of its own fighters were killed, it said.

Iran's state-run Tehran radio said Thursday that Mr. Boroujerdi discussed the Afghan situation with Mr. Rabbani, whom Tehran still recognises as the lawful Afghan head of state, whose forces were driven out of Kabul by the Taleban Islamic militia in September.

Mr. Boroujerdi had stopped off in Tajikistan on his way to Afghanistan and met the Tajik foreign minister, the radio said.

At least 200 activists from Bangladesh's fundamentalist Jamaat-e-Islami Party are fighting alongside the Taleban in Afghanistan, a report in Dhaka said Saturday.

However, the report by the privately-run Probe News Agency was immediately denied by a spokesman for the party.

"The report is totally false and baseless," the Jamaat spokesman said, adding that the party had "no relation" with those who the report said had gone to Afghanistan.

In Probe's report, published Saturday by the Bhorer Kagoj daily, mission chiefs in India and Bangladesh for the ousted Afghan government of Burhanuddin Rabbani said that Jamaat activists had already joined the Taleban in the ongoing war there.

Apart from the 200 who had already joined, another 100 were preparing to go and fight, the report said.

Masud Khalili, ambassador in New Delhi for the ousted Afghan government, told Probe 27 Bangladeshis were arrested on May 27 on the Iran-Afghanistan border after a skirmish with soldiers loyal to Mr. Rabbani.

Meanwhile, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Posuvalyuk held talks on the Afghan conflict with senior Pakistani officials in Islamabad Saturday, officials sources said. Details of the talks held at the Pakistani Foreign Ministry were not immediately available.

Mr. Posuvalyuk, who flew in here late Friday from Beijing, met with Foreign Minister Gobar Ayub Khan and Foreign Secretary Shamshad Ahmad.

Mr. Khan is himself scheduled to travel to Moscow early next month for higher level talks on regional and bilateral issues following recent talks by a Foreign Office official in the Russian capital.

Traumatized by communism and violence, Albania faces bleak future

TIRANA, Albania (AP) — On the outskirts of this troubled capital, the decaying and deserted Stalin textile works symbolise Albania's past, present and possibly, its future.

Built during the 40-year dictatorship of Enver Hoxha, the factory was typical of the industrial behemoths Communists imposed on rural societies in the name of progress. In the isolation of Hoxha's Albania, it seemed to work.

Rafail Telo, proud of his days as a Stalin Works mechanic, recalled that, "some textiles we produced were even exported."

Now a 61-year-old pensioner, Mr. Telo is one of the post-Communist millions who gave their working lives to a dying system and got nothing in return. He even lost his meager pension when authority collapsed in Albania in a chaotic spring revolt against President Sali Berisha.

Eyes and hearing failing, Mr. Telo now sits on a Tirana street, hoping someone will pay 10 lek (six cents) to weigh in on his pathetic bathroom scale. One recent morning, he'd made 60 lek (36 cents) — too little even for a loaf of bread, "I'm worth nothing now," he said.

Until the revolt, Albania's present had seemed worthwhile.

Alongside relics like Stalin Works, thousands of kiosks and shops had sprouted during a period of low inflation and high growth. Albanians fixed shabby apartments or built new homes.

Beneath the surface, society still was traumatised from decades of brutal communism. The trauma broke

into the open this spring when Pyramid schemes that had fed the apparent boom collapsed.

"While the cash came in, few Albanians questioned its origin, or pondered how the Mercedes could be the prevalent car in a dirt-poor country that banned private vehicles until 1991.

When the money dried up, Albanians saw their brash new world as a mere facade for crime and corruption. In shock and rage, they turned on Mr. Berisha, and on each other.

Many believe Mr. Berisha hijacked Albania's weak democracy by suppressing opponents and the media, and rigging last year's elections. Then, they suspect, he took their money, too.

Now, the gun talks in Albania. It has sunk into medieval violence.

The corpses of secret police murdered by crowds in the port of Vlora, or the mutilated torsos of special forces killed in the central town of Cerkir testify to visceral hatred of Mr. Berisha.

His men wreaked vengeance for Cerkir by turning armoured vehicles and guns on a hospital where one of the special force officers died. They beat up two staff members and took the director's father hostage.

Elections on June 29 are supposed to end this turmoil. Even foreign envoys pushing the vote admit it will be imperfect. But, they argue, something must be done.

"Not having these elections ... would be an act of collective suicide, the total destruction of Albania," said Greek Foreign Minister Theodoros Pangalos. "You have to choose between what's there, and worse."

If the vote produces no government worth the name, the future looks as bleak as the Stalin Works, stripped of bricks and anything else Albanians could plunder to build a home.

Rebel committees who control most southern towns could relaunch their armed revolt against Mr. Berisha.

The relaxed, Italian-led force of 6,000 foreign troops deployed to secure aid would likely have to get tough against thousands trying to flee to neighboring Greece, or across the Adriatic to Italy.

"Europe will pay, if elections are again not free and fair," said Neritan Ceka, leader of the opposition Democratic Alliance. "If the elections fail, Albanians will decide another way: Revolution."

Many Albanians are disgusted by all politicians, who talk little about how to solve searing poverty and other problems of a society where "average wage" is now a meaningless term.

But most people seem to want elections and Mr. Berisha's demise, although his office is not up for grabs June 29 and he has almost all of his second five-year term left to serve.

"I hope he goes as quickly as possible," said Mariana Leka, 34, a Tirana opera singer. Will Berisha stay on? "I hope not," said a 20-year-old biology student, Eglantina Tafthafa.

"We believed Berisha was bringing us democracy," said Sadik Alesi, one of thousands of private shopkeepers facing bankruptcy now that commerce has collapsed. "But he was not the right person."

N. Zealand opposition warns against complacency over nuclear-free zone

WELLINGTON (AFP) — New Zealand should not be complacent about maintaining its nuclear-free zone status, opposition leader Helen Clark warned Saturday in a speech marking the 10th anniversary of the act.

The New Zealand Nuclear Free Zone, Disarmament and Arms Control Act was passed in 1987 by the Labour Party government of Premier David Lange.

Ms. Clark, the current Labour Party leader, said the

legislation had greatly enhanced New Zealand's reputation as an independent-minded country prepared to stand up for what it believed in. But in a speech to a peace studies foundation seminar in Auckland she warned there could be no complacency about the nuclear-free legislation. "Some in the (ruling) National Party are campaigning actively to weaken our strong legislation," she said.

(Defence Minister Paul) East visited nuclear-powered warships in Hawaii a few months ago and has stated publicly that he would like to see them return to New Zealand." She said Labour believed the admission of nuclear-powered warships to New Zealand would pose unnecessary risks to New Zealand. Ms. Clark said New Zealand must continue to support nuclear disarmament internationally.

Judge asks Jospin to open Mitterrand era files

PARIS (R) — A magistrate investigating illegal wiretapping under late French Socialist President Francois Mitterrand has asked new Socialist Prime Minister Lionel Jospin to waive the official secrets act in the case, a judicial source said Friday.

Mr. Jospin, who was on frosty terms with Mitterrand during the last years of his 1981-1995 term because of scandals in high places, had said during his own recent campaign that he would waive the secrets act if the revamped left-wing coalition he leads won the election.

The source said magistrate Jean-Paul Valat had now asked Mr. Jospin to make good his promise.

Waiving the secrets act would allow those involved, including police officers formerly attached to an anti-terrorist unit belonging to the presidential staff, to testify freely.

On Thursday officials said Conservative ex-Premier Alain Juppe, in a last-minute decision before his election defeat, handed hitherto secret files on the case to a magistrate.

They confirmed a report by the daily Le Monde that Mr. Juppe ordered the counter-intelligence agency DST last week to hand almost all the files to investigating magistrate Jean-Michel Charrier.

Mr. Juppe had previously said the files were covered by state secrecy. They contain information on journalists, lawyers and politicians whose telephone conversations were monitored in 1982-1986 by Mitterrand's anti-terrorism unit.

The files were found in a garage rented by the former chief of the disbanded anti-terrorism unit, Christian Prouteau.

The head of the state watchdog on wiretaps, Paul Bouchet, told Reuters Mr. Juppe had asked him to sort out which ones must be covered by state secrecy, and both agreed that most could not because this would mean covering up illicit acts.



President Clinton and first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton stand with their daughter Chelsea after her high school graduation from Sidwell Friends School. Chelsea will attend Stanford University in the fall (Reuter photo)

White House warns Congress not to revoke MFN for China

WASHINGTON (R) — White House National Security Adviser Sandy Berger warned Congress Friday that revoking Most Favoured Nation (MFN) trade status for China "could well make China our enemy."

In remarks prepared for delivery Friday night, Mr. Berger outlined in dire terms what the Clinton administration fears could happen if Congress denies the favourable tariff treatment for Chinese goods entering the United States.

He said it would "cut off our contact with the Chinese people" rather than strengthen the forces for "human rights, would eliminate cooperation on weapons proliferation, close an emerging market to U.S. exports and weaken Hong Kong just as the British colony reverts to Chinese rule on July 1.

"Revoking MFN would make China more isolated and less likely to play by the rules of international conduct," Mr. Berger said. "Treating China as our enemy could well make China our enemy."

Mr. Berger, in his speech to the Council on Foreign Relations think tank in New York, was the latest top administration official to defend President Bill Clinton's decision to extend MFN to China for another year.

Some members of Congress are opposed because of concerns about Chinese human rights practices, allegations that Beijing is contributing to the spread of weapons of

mass destruction and worry about the future of Hong Kong. A growing trade deficit with China is also contributing to their unease.

Earlier this week, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Jesse Helms, a North Carolina Republican, introduced a resolution to deny China MFN trade status.

House Democratic leader Richard Gephardt of Missouri, in a break with the administration, also opposes MFN status for China. A vote is expected later this month.

Mr. Berger said the opponents' goals were generally sound — advancing human rights and religious freedom, promoting fair trade and strengthening regional and global security. But he said the method chosen, "destroying our economic relations with China," was misguided.

On Hong Kong, Mr. Berger said the international community would watch closely to see if China adheres to the "letter and the spirit" of the 1984 British-Chinese Joint Declaration that guarantees a high degree of autonomy for Hong Kong and allows it to maintain its capitalist system.

"We should look to see if elections for the new legislature are set soon and held freely; if freedom of speech, press, religion and association are maintained; if Hong Kong's courts operate without interference; if its economy remains open and market-oriented," Mr. Berger said.

New virus claims 19 lives in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR (R) — The death toll from a new virus strain in Malaysia's Borneo state of Sarawak has climbed to 19, local newspapers reported Saturday.

Sarawak state director of Medical and Health Services, Mohamad Taha Arif was quoted by the papers as saying that two more infants succumbed to the Coxsackie B virus Thursday.

He said 29 children were in an isolation ward at the General Hospital in Sibul, a coastal town in Sarawak state.

The Coxsackie B virus has also struck children in

the state capital of Kuching and Sarikei in Sarawak.

The Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak George Chan Hong Nam said experts from the World Health Organisation and the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta will arrive in Sibul Monday to assist local health authorities in tackling the infection, which started in April.

Kindergarten schools in Sibul have been ordered to close, while primary schools in the affected areas have been told to consider whether to close down the first three grades of their schools as well.

Health Minister Chua Jui Meng said Friday that children in the affected areas should remain at home even after the start of the new school term next week. He advised them to stay away from other places where small children gather.

The virus, which can be carried by air, was originally found in infected food. Health officials have said. Symptoms include fever, nervous fits, paralysis and finally heart failure.

The Malaysian government had earlier turned to the Internet to seek help in tackling the spread of the disease.

U.S. demands Croatia end election violence

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States said Friday it deplored violent incidents threatening Croatia's June 15 elections and made clear it expected Zagreb to act quickly to make the campaign environment secure.

The State Department issued its warning after Vlado Gotovac, one of two challengers to President Franjo Tudjman in next week's presidential election, suffered a concussion after being struck on the head at a rally.

Also, a second opposition candidate, Zdravko Tomac, narrowly escaped injury during a stone-throwing incident aimed at his vehicle during a campaign appearance.

"The United States deplores these violent incidents, which threaten to mar what we hope will be a free

and fair election," State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said.

"Without the ability to travel freely and speak freely, presidential candidates, particularly those of the opposition parties, will have no opportunity to carry their message to the Croatian electorate," he said.

Washington took a tough line on the Croatian elections less than a week after Secretary of State Madeleine Albright publicly scolded Croatia for violating its Dayton Peace Accord commitments on refugees, war criminals and other issues.

During a trip last weekend to the Balkans, she firmly renewed a U.S. threat to block international financial assistance for Croatia as well as its integration into Western institutions if Zagreb did not live up to these

obligations. She made a similar threat about Serbia.

Mr. Burns underscored that determination Friday. "We do not have unlimited patience ... we mean what we say here," he said. However, he declined to set a deadline for U.S. action.

On the Croatia election violence, the spokesman said he was "not in a position to make any formal charges" about possible complicity with the Zagreb government.

But he declared that "since these outrageous incidents have occurred, it really is incumbent upon the government of Croatia to create the kind of conditions that will make these kinds of attacks impossible between now and June 15th."

He noted that two suspects have been arrested in connection with the attack

Chelsea Clinton graduates from high school

WASHINGTON (R) — A sentimental President Bill Clinton Friday led the high school commencement of daughter Chelsea and her classmates, urging them to chase their dreams because "amazing things will happen" even if they fail.

With first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton joining the other beaming families in the audience at Sidwell Friends School, Mr. Clinton spoke of the unlimited opportunities for the 122 graduates and the endless memories of their parents.

"Though we have raised you for this moment of departure, and we are very proud of you, part of us longs to hold you once more as we did when you could barely walk," Mr. Clinton told the graduates of the elite school.

Mr. Clinton and his wife, who were protective of their 17-year-old daughter as she grew up in the limelight of the White House, have been preparing themselves as she departs in the fall for Stanford University in Palo Alto, California.

"Our pride and joy are tempered by our coming separation from you," Mr. Clinton said, speaking on behalf of all the parents at the outdoor ceremony held under sycamore trees.

"We hope someday you will have children of your own to bring to this happy day and know how we feel," he said. "Remember that we love you, and no matter what anybody says, you can come home again."

Turning more to the traditional words of inspiration for graduation speakers, he told the youthful faces that, "for what it's worth, here's my advice."

"Dream big and chase your dreams," he said. "You will have your failures, but you will grow from every honest effort ... even if you don't get what you think you want, amazing things will happen."

White House aides said Mr. Clinton had been thinking about his remarks for weeks, and putting them down on paper the last few days.

Mrs. Clinton, too, has been thinking about graduation — writing in her syndicated column this week that the end of Chelsea's high school years was a bittersweet moment.

"We find ourselves fighting back tears as we contemplate what our days will be like when our daughter leaves the nest to embark on a new stage of life," she wrote.

Since coming to the White House in 1993, the Clintons have tried to shield their daughter from the publicity that engulfed the offspring of some recent first families.

The graduation ceremony itself was closed to the press, although the White House agreed to have Mr. Clinton's remarks fed live back to the briefing room at the White House.

on Gotovac and said: "The United States urges the government of Croatia to prosecute these people, because without firm prosecution and a firm signal from the government of Croatia, we fear that similar attacks may occur during this election campaign."

Mr. Gotovac, 66, head of the Social Liberal Party (HLSL), was flown to a Zagreb hospital after being hit on the head with a belt buckle by a Croatian soldier during an election rally in the Istrian town of Pula late Thursday.

In the case of the other opposition candidate, Social Democrat Tomac, a stone was thrown at his campaign van in northern Croatia, breaking the windshield and slightly injuring the driver. Mr. Tomac was in a car following the van.



Pope John Paul II stands surrounded by his beloved Polish Tatra Mountains from the Kasprowy Wierch peak Friday, on the seventh day of his 11-day nostalgic trip to his homeland (Renter photo)

Pope emotionally recalls assassination attempt

ZAKOPANE, Poland (R) — Pope John Paul Saturday emotionally recalled the day in 1981 when he was nearly killed by a would-be assassin's bullet and thanked his countrymen for praying for his life to be spared.

The Pope, wrapping up a three-day, mostly private stay in the southern Poland mountain town of Zakopane that was dear to him in his youth, inaugurated a church built by local people as a devotional offering to the Madonna of Fatima for saving his life.

"The history of this church is linked to the event which took place in St. Peter's Square on May 13, 1981," the Pope said in the sermon of a mass at the new church, built in a style resembling a mountain chalet, typical of the Tatra region.

"At that time I experienced great mortal danger and suffering but also the great mercy of God," said the Pope, who rarely speaks in public about the attempt on his life.

Turkish gunman Mehmet

Ali Agca shot the Pope in the hand and abdomen in St. Peter's Square as the Pontiff was riding in an open jeep before thousands of people at his general audience.

Emergency surgery saved his life. Mr. Agca, whom the Pope later forgave publicly and visited in jail, was wrestled to the ground by pilgrims, including a nun, and is serving a life sentence in Italy.

The Pope believes that his life was spared through the intercession of the Madonna of Fatima, because the shooting took place on the anniversary of the day in 1917 when she is said to have appeared for the first of six times that year to three poor Portuguese shepherd children.

"By the intercession of Our Lady of Fatima, my life was given back to me. During my stay in hospital I was the object of a great outpouring of human kindness from all parts of the world," he said.

The assassination attempt against the Pope is one of

the enduring mysteries among the great crimes of the 20th century.

At a major trial in 1986 Italian prosecutors failed to prove their charges that the Bulgarian secret services had hired Mr. Agca on behalf of the Soviet Union in order to snuff out the Pope's support for the Solidarity Union in his homeland.

At the time, Solidarity was threatening the stability of the Soviet Bloc and the Pope reportedly told the late Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev that if Moscow invaded Poland he would support resistance.

The so-called "Bulgarian connection" trial ended with an acquittal for lack of sufficient evidence of three Turks and three Bulgarians who had been charged with conspiring with Mr. Agca.

The Portuguese children who reported they had seen the Madonna in 1917 said she had spoken to them of a three-part secret, the third part of which has never been revealed.

The first involved a vision

of hell and war engulfing Europe, the second was an invitation to all believers to pray for the conversion of the world amid the coming challenge to the church by Marxism on the eve of the October Revolution.

The third, so-called "secret of Fatima" is known only by three people: the Pope, Sister Lucia, the last surviving visionary, and Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, head of the Vatican's Doctrinal Office.

Cardinal Ratzinger has said the secret is not a prophesy of an apocalyptic event.

In his sermon, the Pope referred to the first two parts of the message, saying the 20th century had been "marked by war, hatred, the fundamental violation of human rights, the immense suffering of individuals and nations."

In a reference to Marxism's failed attempt to wipe out all forms of religious belief, the Pope spoke of the "struggle against God, carried out even to the denial of his existence."

Sri Lankan troops tighten grip on key Tiger-held town

Rebels say epidemics spreading

COLOMBO (AFP) — Tamil guerrillas said diseases were spreading in areas under their control in northern Sri Lanka as government forces closed in on a key rebel-held town after a day's fighting killed 76 on both sides.

Government forces were a short distance away from the rebel stronghold of Puliyankulam, located along a vital highway to the northern Peninsula of Jaffna, after ferocious battles Friday, the Defence Ministry said.

"The operation is progressing steadily," a Defence Ministry spokesman said adding close range fighting left 16 soldiers killed and 37 wounded since the drive was resumed Friday after a 13-day lull.

The military said at least 60 guerrillas also died while trying to resist the military march on the town of Puliyankulam and tanks, helicopter gunships and artillery guns were pressed into service.

"Troops successfully repulsed all attempts of the terrorists by engaging them at close proximity, inflicting heavy casualties," the ministry said in a statement.

Troops have another 60 kilometres to go before they will be able to open the road to Jaffna through rebel-infested jungle areas. Defence sources said the campaign could take weeks, if not months.

As troops mounted pressure on the rebels from two flanks, the guerrillas in a statement from their London office said diseases were spreading uncontrollably in the region of Wanni where security forces are currently conducting their offensive code named "Sure of Victory."

"Cholera, typhoid, diarrhoea, dysentery, scabies, malaria, cerebral malaria and common fever are rampant," the rebels said in the statement sent here from its London office.

It accused the government

of imposing an embargo on medicines going into rebel held areas, a charge denied by the authorities.

Energy Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte said the latest military drive will pin down the rebels and help troops to open the highway to the former rebel bastion of Jaffna which the security forces captured in December 1995.

Mr. Ratwatte, who also holds the junior defence portfolio and leads the government's campaign against the Tigers, said a column of elite Special Forces (SF) commandos were closing in on another vital base of the rebels.

The SF troops moved within close proximity to the main "one-four" base of the Tiger supreme Velupillai Prabhakaran, the country's most wanted man, who is leading his cadres from a secret hideout somewhere in the northeast.

"We will get him," the minister told reporters here Friday.

In the first phase of the offensive begun on May 13, some 120 soldiers were killed while the military estimates Tiger casualties at more than 300 killed. The Tigers say they lost only 82 and claim killing more soldiers.

Troops had advanced some five kilometres since resuming the drive at dawn Friday while the second column was moving northwards towards a rebel town known as Oddusudan, officials said.

The Tigers had accused the military of pounding Oddusudan in the past week and said thousands of civilians had been made homeless.

The Tiger guerrillas are leading a drive out campaign for independence in the island's northern and eastern regions. More than 50,000 people have been killed in the separatist conflict in the past 25 years.

Calm returns to Brazzaville

BRAZZAVILLE (R) — Relative calm returned to the capital of Congo Brazzaville Saturday after two days of firefighting between supporters of former President Denis Sassou Nguesso and the army, witnesses said.

Visitors reported isolated shots after a second night of curfew but said radio and television, which had stopped broadcasting, were back on the air.

There was no official comment on the incidents from President Pascal Lissouba's administration but a communique from a group calling itself the collectivity of Congolese women appealed for a peaceful solution to the crisis.

Mr. Lissouba's government has ordered a crackdown on private militias and unauthorised possession of weapons ahead of a presidential election planned for July 27.

Political parties armed supporters after 1993 parliamentary elections. At that time, ethnic and political clashes killed 2,000 people in the capital. The militias were supposed to have been disbanded.

Witnesses had reported shots and explosions near the presidency after the start of the curfew Friday night.

On Saturday, they said these appeared to have been mortar, rocket-propelled grenades or heavy weapons fired from near the presidency in the direction of Mr. Sassou Nguesso's northern stronghold.

One report said supporters of Mr. Sassou Nguesso, a former military leader named president in 1979 but voted out of office with the advent of democratic reform in 1992, had taken control of a military camp in the north.

Witnesses reported looting in the city centre.

Fighting between supporters of Mr. Sassou Nguesso and of Mr. Lissouba's campaign manager in the north has killed at least 16 people in under a month.

The standoff began Thursday when troops surrounded Mr. Sassou Nguesso's home. Officials said they had gone to arrest members of his entourage on murder charges in connection with the incidents in the north.

Mr. Lissouba, Mr. Sassou Nguesso and Brazzaville Mayor and 1992 presidential runnerup Bernard Kolelas are likely to be the front-runners among about a dozen hopefuls on July 27, if the polls take place.

U.S. envoy presses action on former Zaire refugee massacres

KINSHASA (AP) — Washington's U.N. ambassador pressed Congo's government to clear up its human rights record, demanding it investigate massacres of Rwandan refugees and punish those responsible.

U.S. support for Congo's government will be tied to President Laurent Kabila's response to human rights concerns and his willingness to promote democracy, Ambassador Bill Richardson said after arriving in the capital.

"We are pleased with some of the steps he has taken but we want to see more," Mr. Richardson said. He praised Mr. Kabila's promise to hold elections in two years and his creation of a government including representatives of various political affiliations.

But the United States wants more progress on human rights issues, Mr. Richardson said, particularly on allegations that Mr. Kabila's fighters targeted Rwandan refugees when they swept across the country in their war to oust Mobutu Sese Seko, the former dictator.

"The level of American engagement is going to depend on the type of policies that are pursued by the Kabila government in the political, economic and humanitarian areas," Mr. Richardson said.

Nearly all the refugees are Hutus who fled Rwanda for fear of reprisals after the slaughter there of a half-million Tutsis by militant Hutus in 1994. They have accused Mr. Kabila and his Tutsi-backed army, which was heavily backed by Rwanda's Tutsi-led government, of targeting them.

"We want the reports of those massacres investigated. We want those involved in these massacres to be punished," said Mr. Richardson, who planned to visit refugee areas in eastern Congo Saturday.

Backing down from earlier assertions it had nothing to do with alleged massacres of Rwandan refugees, Congo's government now acknowledges some may have been killed in cross fire during the civil war.

"At various times we fought against armed refugees, that is not a secret," Interior Minister Mwenze Kongolo told the Associated Press Wednesday. "We imagine that in a war there will be people killed who are not armed combatants."

In a sign that Mr. Kabila has recognised the need to avoid spending the first months of his administration on the defensive, he agreed this week to designate a cabinet minister to deal directly with the United Nations on the plight of refugees in Congo.

It was far from an admission of wrongdoing, but indicated that Mr. Kabila was moving toward taking more responsibility for refugees' well-being to secure international aid.

In another bid to attract foreign aid, Mr.

Kabila appointed a new minister Friday to act as a liaison with international development organisations. The international cooperation minister, Thomas Kanza, was Congo's first representative to the Organisation of African Unity after independence.

Mr. Kabila also appointed national reconstruction minister, Etienne Mbuyi, and deputy information minister, Juliette Lumumba, daughter of Congo's first prime minister, Patrice Lumumba — murdered, it is widely believed, with Mr. Mobutu's complicity.

Decades of neglect and corruption under Mr. Mobutu have left Congo with little working infrastructure, rendering it unable to exploit its mineral wealth without outside assistance.

This central African country, formerly known as Zaire, received an average of more than \$40 million a year in U.S. assistance over a 15-year period, much of it in loans that have never been repaid. Aid was abruptly cut off in 1991.

Since the beginning of the year, the United Nations has sent about 225,000 Rwandan refugees back home by land and by air. Another 60 were due to be flown home Friday from Mbandaka, Congo, where UNHCR spokesman Pam O'Toole said 50 to 100 refugees were arriving daily.

The Rwandan connection has dogged Mr. Kabila since his army's victorious arrival May 17 in Kinshasa, prompting opposition militants to accuse him of making the country a colony of Rwanda.

Fresh protests broke out Friday involving supporters of opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi, who marched through downtown chanting, "no to dictatorship, no to recolonisation of our country."

"If we owe them something for liberating us we will pay the debt, but they must go home," said one marcher, Punzu Sukuma, of Mr. Kabila's Rwandan backers.

The march began with about 50 people but picked up supporters along the way until it involved about 1,000. A truck carrying about a dozen soldiers followed alongside but did not intervene, despite a government ban on political protests.

The crowd at one point stole the rifles from two soldiers after one of them had fired shots in the air to disperse the crowd. The soldiers fled and the march carried on to Mr. Tshisekedi's house, with the protesters keeping the weapons.

Mr. Tshisekedi is bitter that he was passed over when Mr. Kabila created his government, and he has sought to rally support by portraying Mr. Kabila as a slave to foreign interests.

Mr. Richardson is heading a delegation of 13 people, including representatives from the U.S. Agency for International Development and the National Security Council.

S. Korean president says North must be watched

SEOUL (R) — South Korean President Kim Young-Sam said Saturday Communist North Korea remained a threat because it could stage military provocations and it needed to be watched closely.

"If a crisis of North Korea's system reaches the very end, there is a high possibility that the North in despair will commit military provocations as a last resort," Mr. Kim said at a luncheon meeting of military leaders including Defence Minister Kim Dong-In.

President Kim said the South Korean military must not be idle in keeping vigilance on the north and should increase its preparedness against possible intrusion, the presidential Blue House said in a state-

ment.

Earlier Saturday, Defence Minister Kim told military leaders famine and a faltering economy in North Korea could trigger "adventurist" military provocation.

He called on the South's military to increase its readiness for "any type of military provocation."

The meeting was held two days after North and South Korean naval vessels exchanged fire Thursday after a northern patrol boat strayed South with a fleet of nine fishing boats.

The North Korean boat fired three rounds at three South Korean naval ships as they steamed to intercept it. The southern side returned fire with two rounds.

A Defence Ministry spokesman said the meeting of military leaders had been

previously scheduled.

The state-run Korea Broadcasting System (KBS) radio said military leaders discussed the possibility of more intrusions by North Korean naval vessels. They decided they would act instantly to block any further misjudgements by the rival Communist neighbour.

But the ministry spokesman said he could not confirm the report.

Minister Kim warned against complacency in national security. He said North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il had strengthened his grip on the military and was pursuing a "military-first policy."

Impoverished North Korea had focused its resources on building up its war machine despite an acute food shortage and economic

difficulties, he said.

Kim Jong-Il, North Korea's "great leader" Kim Il-Sung's son, has taken control of the Stalinist state since his father's death but has yet to be confirmed as the state's president and head of the ruling Workers Party.

South Korea has become edgy over reports of a food crisis in the North.

South Korea said Thursday the north could overcome its food shortage and the government in Pyongyang may be overstating the problem, contradicting U.N. warnings that North Korea faces famine with no food left by June 20.

The two Koreas are still technically at war since the 1950-53 Korean War.

Quebec separatists seek new winning strategy

MONTREAL (R) — Separatists are seeking a new strategy to win the next referendum on Quebec independence after a disappointing drop in support in last Monday's Canadian election.

Voters in the French-speaking province sent the separatist Bloc Quebecois back to Canada's House of Commons Monday with 44 of Quebec's 75 seats, a drop of 10 seats from the 1993 election.

More worrisome for the Bloc and its separatist supporters was its sharp decline in Quebec's popular vote to 38.3 per cent from 49.3 per cent in 1993.

The result was also a comedown from the 49.4 per cent vote for separation in the October 1995 Quebec referendum.

Quebec's separatist Parti Quebecois government has said it will hold another referendum on independence if it wins the next provincial election, which may be next year.

Canadian Prime Minister

Jean Chretien, whose Liberals were reelected with a reduced majority, took comfort in the drop in separatist support, saying it was the lowest score for a Quebec separatist party since 1973.

Although happy to have retained most Quebec seats, some separatist supporters are concerned that 60 per cent of the province's 3.6 million voters who cast ballots chose parties committed to Canadian unity.

"We had 54 seats and the chance to get more, and we found ourselves with 10 less seats and 500,000 less votes," said Yves Duhaime, a Bloc Quebecois candidate who came within 1,200 votes of defeating Mr. Chretien in his home district.

"We had a campaign that was absolutely catastrophic at its start," Mr. Duhaime said.

Mr. Duhaime plans to voice his objections at the party's first post-election meeting in coming weeks.

"When we are behind closed doors, we will talk things over clearly, that is certain," he told Reuters.

Mr. Duhaime said the Bloc strayed from its fundamental objective during the campaign under Gilles Duceppe, who defeated him for the party leadership in March.

Rather than simply portraying itself as the best defender of Quebec's interests, the Bloc should have underscored the need to send a separatist party in force to Ottawa to promote the province's independence drive, Mr. Duhaime said.

"In the second half of the campaign, we came back to the essential...the necessity of the Bloc being there, and the promotion of sovereignty," he said.

Mr. Duhaime was referring to the participation late in the campaign of former Quebec Premier Jacques Parizeau, who analysts said helped motivate committed separatists to vote.

Bloc member of parliament Real Menard said he wanted the separatists' soul-searching to go even further.

"We did not succeed in convincing as many Quebecers as we should have of the urgency of sovereignty," Mr. Menard said.

Mr. Menard called for a separatist summit to include the Bloc and Parti Quebecois — its provincial separatist ally — and labour and community groups to develop a common strategy on ensuring a referendum win.

"We cannot build a majority without a wide coalition," Mr. Menard said.

In the latest federal campaign, the Quebec Federation of Labour, the province's largest union and a strong supporter of independence, refused to endorse the Bloc in protest over the Parti Quebecois government's austerity measures.

Blair urges reform to tackle joblessness

BONN (R) — British Prime Minister Tony Blair wrapped up a hectic two days of diplomacy Friday confident that Europe was heeding his message that economic reform to tackle mass unemployment can be delayed no longer.

Buoyed by an opinion poll at home showing that within five weeks of taking power he was the most popular prime minister on record, Mr. Blair made it clear after talks in Bonn with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl that he wanted to use his honeymoon to reestablish Britain as a leading player on the European stage.

"What is important for us to understand as a country

is that people are looking to Britain to give some leadership in what are very difficult times in Europe."

"People like the idea of a Britain that is constructive and is setting the agenda," Mr. Blair told reporters after two hours of talks with Mr. Kohl that British officials called friendly and constructive.

The Labour prime minister pressed on Mr. Kohl the same message he had delivered at a meeting of Europe's centre-left parties in the southern Swedish city of Malmo: New economic times, and Europe's 18 million jobless, require governments to come up with new solutions.

Mr. Blair said he believed

his mantra of flexible markets was striking a chord — even in a country like Germany whose successful social market economic model relies on a degree of state intervention that would be anathema in new Labour Britain.

"I was delighted that there was a very strong measure of agreement between myself and Chancellor Kohl that we do require economic reform in Europe," Mr. Blair said.

"People know it's a different type of economy today and we have to focus on education, technology, developing small businesses — not the old state intervention of the 60s," he added.

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One step in right direction

EVEN THOUGH there was a lower-than-expected turnout for the Algerian parliamentary elections and allegations of fraud were rampant, 10 political parties and 11 independents won seats in the newly-elected national assembly. Although the opposition cast doubts about the integrity of the elections and despite the fact that the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) boycotted the party, the event remains a milestone in the recent history of that troubled country. The outlawing of a major political force has given pro-pluralistic democracy forces additional ammunition to challenge the effectiveness of the elections. Of course it would have been more prudent to let the Algerians themselves decide the fate of FIS instead of the regime depriving it of the right to assume power when it won through the ballot box. The fact that only 240 international observers working under the auspices of the United Nations, Arab League and Organisation of African Unity have monitored some 35,000 polling stations have also lent support to the accusation that fair play may have been repeatedly violated during Friday's elections.

Despite all these limitations and constraints, what emerged from the elections could still be a prelude to normalcy in the country provided the new parliament worked relentlessly to reintegrate the FIS into the Algerian body politic. The fact that Algerian President Liamine Zeroual's National Democratic Rally won 155 seats of the assembly's 380 and its partner and ally the National Liberation Front 64 seats, suggests that the regime has a free hand to do whatever it chooses in the conduct of the country's domestic and external affairs. On the other hand, opposition parties also enjoy also a formidable power, represented by 150 seats that must be reckoned with even though the kind of parliament Algeria now enjoys has limited powers due to constitutional amendments introduced by the government prior to elections.

The recent elections cannot be viewed as a one shot democratic step but must be followed up by other measures that aim to consolidate pluralistic democracy in the North African Arab country. As the elections were imperfect, other steps need to be undertaken in the near future to rectify the current shortcomings.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Ra'i discuss Turkey's occupation of northern Iraqi territories, saying that the area under Ankara's control is almost double the size of the state of Kuwait. Tareq Masarweh, quoting official figures provided by Kurdish and Turkish authorities, said that the total population evicted from their homeland as a result of this invasion is estimated at double the number of the Kuwaiti population. Why then, asked the writer, no Arab or foreign powers have, to date, called for U.N. action or an international community attack on Turkey, as they did with Iraq when it briefly occupied Kuwait. He recalled that some of the Arab states were quick to condemn Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and were instrumental in instigating the Western powers to send an army to destroy Iraq for its invasion and its occupation of Kuwait. Now, and in light of this invasion, the Arab countries are silent and the world community is not lifting a finger in defence of the Kurds, who are being annihilated by the Turks, and in support of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a U.N. member country subjected to external aggression, said the writer. He noted that some of the Arabs had wanted to see an end to Iraq's occupation of Kuwait through pan-Arab mediation while others wanted foreign powers to crush Iraq and end this occupation. But, he said, none of the Arabs seem to be concerned with Turkey's invasion of part of Iraq's Arab homeland now.

A WRITER for Al Dustour criticised Foreign Minister Fayez Tarawneh's announcement that Jordan is ready to take part in the Doha Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic conference, saying that such statements are bound to encourage Israel to remain adamant in its position and firmly determined to block the peace process. Oreib Rintawi said it is not in the interest of Jordan, the Palestinians or any other Arab country, to participate in this conference and Jordan should declare that the Kingdom is committed to pan-Arab decisions and collective actions. As long as the Israelis are blocking the peace process and are not committed to the implementation of peace accords reached with the Arabs, and as long as they maintain their occupation of Arab lands in Palestine, Syria and Lebanon, there can be no justification at all for such a conference in which Israel will be represented, stressed the writer. Mr. Tarawneh had said that the Doha conference would be a chance for businessmen to meet, but under the prevailing situation in the Arab World there can be no benefit from a parley in which the Israelis are participating since they would be meeting in a hostile atmosphere and not in a favourable climate that would encourage business, according to the writer. He said Israel's participation in such a conference would give Israeli Premier Benjamin Netanyahu and his government further reassurance that they can pursue their present policies without having their business interests with the Arab World affected in the least.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Upgrading refugee camps should remain U.N.'s responsibility

WHILE INVOLVED in the implementation of a far-reaching economic adjustment programme, based on belt tightening, curbing of consumption and lowering the standard of living in order to make ends meet, the government of Jordan is now considering a comprehensive package of social safety nets, an indication that social security is given high priority, as have combating unemployment and poverty which were always placed high on the agendas of all Jordanian governments even in difficult times.

However, the package was surrounded by several question marks, which resulted in projecting the package as a political act under a social cover. Under these circumstances, things should be clear and fully transparent to exclude any misunderstanding.

The first issue raised against the package is that it is basically directed at Palestinian refugees camps. The Jordanian public opinion is very sensitive to the concept of a possible permanent settlement of Palestinian refugees outside Palestine. The timing of the project to enhance the quality of life in the camps gave the impression that the right to return was no more valid, that the file was about to be closed and that the temporary camps would be converted into permanent suburbs or integral parts of Jordanians towns and cities.

The second issue is related to the financing of the package. The idea was that it will be financed by grants from donor countries. Yet, it was said that the Ministry of Planning will divert part of the German aid, which was meant for water projects, towards the implementation of the package, which, if true, means that it will be financed in part by funds essential to development projects which should have had priority, especially when any delay regarding building water infrastructure may erode Jordan's water rights. Water is the limiting factor in Jordan's growth and development and should not be sacrificed for any other objective.

The third issue is that the government will finance a major part of the package with loans from the World Bank and other co-financing arrangement through the bank. In this case, we shall be replacing poverty with indebtedness, which is worse. Jordan has a bitter experience with external borrowing and can foresee the risks involved. The World Bank financing is costly. Jordan will have to pay the current rate of interest on the dollar plus a margin. It gives the bank the upper hand in deciding on the implementation and priorities of the project.

The World Bank is reportedly ready to help Jordan in financing drinking water projects but not agricultural irrigation, which suggests that the bank wants to increase the capacity of Jordanian towns to absorb more people. It also insists on cost-recovery pricing of services when it comes to the Jordanian countryside, while waiving this condition regarding the prices of services rendered to refugees camps. It is doubtful that the incentive is simply humanitarian.

The social package is necessary, but it should not be surrounded by doubt and suspicions. Therefore, the government is well advised to come up with definite clarification to the effect that the package is not meant for the camps, its financing will not be at the expense of water projects, the government will not borrow to finance the package and the governmental health, educational and housing services will be priced without any discrimination.

We should not forget that the camps are the responsibility of the United Nations agencies. The responsibility should not be allowed to be shifted onto the Jordanian government, as the Kingdom is simply a host country that cannot cope with the burden.

Securities regulations — how they can help attract institutional investors

By La'ayy Minwer
Al Rimawi

In a previous article the writer, a doctoral law researcher at the London School of Economics and Political Science, University of London, dealt with the general macroeconomics underpinning the most effective 11 Arab securities markets. The following article tries to explain what is meant by the term "securities regulations" and the areas it covers. Professor Barry K. Rider, a former dean and currently Fellow of Jesus College/Cambridge University and Director of the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies/London University, who also served as a consultant in setting up securities regulations regimes in more than 45 countries, has also contributed to the article.

THE DOMESTIC economic rewards of orderly regulated securities markets parallel with competent legal infrastructure in the emerging economies are widely recognised. For example, annual average net private portfolio equity flows to developing countries increased from \$1.3 billion in 1983-1990 to \$39.5 billion in 1994 only. On the other hand, annual average net loans made to developing countries dropped from \$42.3 billion in 1977-1982 to \$3.6 billion in 1993.

Securities markets are often a composite of many different components: broker-dealers, physical or electronic exchanges, clearance and settlements organisations, agents for issuing the securities, institutional underwriters of securities, etc. It is also often said that proposed securities laws for emerging economies should include incentives to increase the supply and demand of securities and promote liquidity in the market. However, aims of securities regulations include: governing public and private issues of securities, corporate listing, disclosure requirements, defining and regulating the contributions of investment companies, pension funds and insurance companies, all of which are often said to be subject to prudential regulation which aims at maintaining systemic stability and the avoidance of concomitant moral hazards. (For example, the collapse of Barings Bank because of systematic abuse in derivative trading has raised considerable implications for systemic stability repercussions in securities firms).

In addition, capital adequacy, authorisation, licensing, conduct of business rules, conflicts of interest, Chinese walls, cold-calling, investment advertisement, compensation funds for investors, market fraud and manipulative practices are among the issues tackled by securities laws. Nevertheless, the structure of regulation depends largely on the institutional financial structure, sophistication of the economy, egregious financial scandals and the financial and legal philosophy of any given country. In the United Kingdom, for example, the structure of regulation is largely embodied in the 1986 Financial Services Act (FSA) which is believed to be two-tiered and self-regulatory. Under this structure, the Securities and Investment Board (SIB) delegates its regulatory responsibility to Self-Regulatory Organisations (SROs). It is interesting to mention that the SIB (like the British Panel on Mergers and Acquisitions) is considered a public body whose decisions are amenable to judicial review. Originally, five SROs obtained recognition from the SIB. These were: The Securities Association (TSA), Financial Intermediaries Managers and Brokers Regulatory Association (FIMBRA), Life Assurance and Unit Trust Regulatory Organisation (LAUTRO), Investment Management Regulatory Organisation (IMRO) and the Association of Futures Brokers and Dealers (AFBD). After a shake up in the British SROs, due to overlapping, three are now in operation: The Securities and Futures

Authorities (SFA), IMRO and Personal Investment Authority (PIA).

Notwithstanding the above, the recent Jordanian Securities Law is a welcome milestone in achieving a more effective regulation for the burgeoning securities industry in Jordan. Moreover, this new law is enhancing international confidence in the Jordanian legal system (though it is simultaneously presenting new modernising challenges to Jordanian lawyers).

One remains hopeful that the sophistication of our securities laws will deepen to encompass many international standards of securities regulations which are conducive to a more dynamic financial system. It is to be hoped that Jordan will structure effective regulatory bodies, akin to the American SEC or the British SIB, with its self-regulatory SROs, and that the nascent Jordanian regulations will eventually make regulatory advances in insider-dealing prohibitions, public offerings and private placements rules, corporate disclosure, companies' stock exchange listings requirements, corporate take-over and mandatory bids provisions, institutional underwriting of securities, market policing and enforcement, civil and criminal corporate liabilities, common law corporate remedies, market manipula-

tion prohibitions, stabilisation rules, etc.

According to Professor Rider, orderly regulated securities markets in the emerging economies are relevant for two important reasons. The first is cosmetic, and stems from the political significance of ensuring adequate confidence in the integrity on the parts of investors, both domestic and international. The second is that orderly markets are considered to be more efficient by economists.

Regarding the most important regulatory issues that need to be tackled by emerging economies, Professor Rider believes that much depends upon the society and circumstances in question. He does not believe that "legislation developed in one country is necessarily transplantable onto another. Instead, he says attention should be given to the political and economic history of the jurisdiction in question. However, he stresses the need for ensuring that there is adequate liquidity and depth in the market and that this is more important than breadth. Interestingly, he does not think that attention to anti-fraud measures is of paramount importance in the early stages of a given market. Yet he insists on the need for transparency of the market as it provides a fair opportunity for investors to assess the market in terms of risk.

Professor Rider adds that there are indeed considerable gaps in regulatory priorities between developed and developing economies. He sees the Western regulatory regimes as obsessed with matters relating insider trading and the control of money laundering. He also finds it ironic that the West focuses on these issues as they prejudicing the development of systemic regulatory structures. Prof. Rider is cautious about emerging economies' borrowing legal concepts from the advanced economies, though he sanctions taking advantage of other countries' regulatory experiments. However, he says that legal concepts in "trust laws" and of "corporate trust" have rightly been borrowed by Japan and Indonesia.

As far as the Arab and Islamic worlds are concerned, Prof. Rider sees Turkey, Pakistan and Indonesia as among the countries which are being receptive to regulatory concerns. He also takes the view that a semi-authoritarian regulator, like the American SEC, is more appropriate for emerging markets.

He says that by catching up with the quickly growing bodies of international standards in securities regulations, emerging economies can attract more Western institutional investors.

North Korean famine — 'nobody should have to apologise for the way we behaved this year'

By Gwynne Dyer

ON APRIL 25 Dean R. Hirsch, head of the California-based relief agency World Vision International, returned from a visit to North Korea, where even the secretive Stalinist government admits that 15 per cent of children under five are undernourished. "Unless food aid reaches these children within the next 30 to 60 days," he said, "the future of North Korea is very grim."

Most of that time has now passed, and little has been done. Moreover, the North Korean government was understating the problem. A recent UNICEF survey in Hunchon city, north of the capital Pyongyang, found that 50 per cent of the children in the city's orphanages and kindergartens were malnourished.

On May 30, North Korea cancelled a barter deal in which it was to exchange 4,000 tonnes of zinc for 20,000 tonnes of grain just before the ship carrying the grain entered its waters.

It would have been the first sale of U.S. grain to North Korea since Cargill Inc, the

Minnesota-based grains firm, was given permission to bypass the U.S. trade embargo and sell up to half a million tonnes of wheat and rice to the hungry country. But Pyongyang has already run out of foreign exchange, and now it has run out of zinc as well. "They can't dig up well because of the floods," said a Tokyo metals trader, "and they don't have enough electric power to supply the zinc refineries."

On June 5, a North Korean patrol boat escorted a fleet of fishing boats (to make sure none of them defect) crossed the boundary into South Korean waters. It was probably just a navigational error, but when a South Korean gunboat came to investigate, the North Korean vessel immediately opened fire.

Nobody was hurt, but the incident underlined the extreme difficulty of dealing with Pyongyang even when the topic is getting food aid to its own starving citizens. So far, little has been achieved, though their food ration is already down to 100 grammes (three ounces) of rice a day, about one-fifth of the minimum daily intake for a normal, healthy adult.

Also on June 5, Peter McDermott, UNICEF's deputy director of emergency programmes, returned to London from a 10-day visit to North Korea and reported that even that meagre 100-gramme ration would run out on June 20. At one orphanage he visited, 60 out of 270 children had died in the past year.

Let us consider what is unfolding before our eyes. A country of 25 million people is about to suffer a famine. The harvest is still over three months away and hundreds of thousands of people may be dead by then, unless far more is done to help them. And this country is not in some inaccessible, poverty-stricken corner of the world; it is in the heart of booming East Asia, surrounded by Japan, South Korea, China and Russia.

Yet the situation in North Korea is so desperate that in the mountainous north-east, where conditions are worst, villagers have reportedly been keeping the bodies of deceased relatives at home until they start to rot, to thwart cannibal grave-robbers. And we have known about the famine for months.

True, the North Korean Communist government is a fanatical and paranoid regime that is very hard to deal with, and the Korean Peninsula is the scene of the world's biggest remaining military confrontation. But famines rarely occur in sane, well-run places.

China was hardly a sane, well-run place at the end of the 50s, when Mao launched the "Great Leap Forward" and an estimated 30 million starved. Ethiopia was neither well-run nor easily accessible when famine struck in 1974-76, or again in 1984-86. At least the North Korean regime admits there is a problem and says it wants help. And if the food aid gets there, North Korea still has the infrastructure to get it to the people.

So why are we weeks away from a major famine in north-east Asia, of all places? The answer, of course, is politics. "One side says there will have to be peace talks before we give food, the other side says you have to give food before we have peace talks — back and forth, back and forth," said Anthony Hewlett, UNICEF's Bangkok representative, who travelled to

North Korea in early May.

The United States and South Korea are refusing massive food aid until North Korea agrees to open serious talks on a permanent peace in the peninsula (there has been only a ceasefire for the past 44 years). Pyongyang is refusing to enter any negotiations until it is guaranteed massive food aid. Neither side seems very concerned about the children who will starve.

It gets incredibly petty. For example, South Korea has promised to ship \$8 million worth of corn, flour, powdered milk and instant noodles to the north by July. After lengthy negotiations, Pyongyang has agreed not to remove the noodles from their foreign-labelled packets before distributing them, but it still resists accepting food labelled as coming from the South Korean Red Cross.

Similarly, Seoul insists that the food must move directly across the inter-Korean frontier at Panmunjom, whereas Pyongyang wants it shipped through a third country to lessen the humiliation of having to accept aid from the enemy. And so it goes.

Catherine Bertini, head of

the U.N. World Food Programme (WFP), estimates that 1.8 million tonnes of food aid are needed to avert large-scale starvation in North Korea this summer. So far, the WFP has raised only 144,000 tonnes of donations (though the European Commission has just volunteered to send another 155,000 tonnes).

It is a start, but the time is already late and much more is needed. Now is not the time to score points against Kim Jong-il's regime in Pyongyang, however bad it is and however much to blame for ruining the North Korean economy.

Last week, 150 years after the fact, British Prime Minister Tony Blair apologised to Ireland for Britain's failure to send enough help in the potato famine of the late 1840s, when a million Irish died and millions more fled overseas. (Ireland's population is still less than it was in 1845.) It was a welcome gesture, but more than a bit late. Nobody should have to make that kind of apology to Koreans in the future for the way we behaved this year.

Improving education can help society progress

By Lena Winfrey Sayeed

RECENTLY, THERE have been programmes as well as talk shows on Jordan TV that concentrated on the quality of education, in particular higher education, in the Kingdom. Understandably, the programmes did not fully cover the subject. To address such a topic, it is important, I believe, to start with elementary education. In order to ensure that the best education is bestowed on children and before concentrating on the quality of education, it is necessary to prepare an environment that will nurture education and allow it to flourish.

I believe that until now there is no such environment in most schools in Jordan. Many children, like some adults, do not see the real importance of education, so they do not care to

make an effort to study. Some children go to private schools with the conviction that money buys their education; they do not want to exert any real effort to learn and they treat their classrooms as playgrounds. There is need to work to change this attitude and campaign for education and its rewards. People of all ages should be made aware of the importance of education and the desire for knowledge should be inculcated in everybody. And it must all begin with the young children.

Teachers, schools and society, however, cannot do this alone. It must come, first and foremost, from the parents. For example, educational toys could be used in place of frivolous toys. Reading could be encouraged by buying children books and magazines. Regular trips to the library

could be another tool of encouragement. Also, parents should try to reserve half an hour every evening to sit down with their children, even though for working parents it might be hard to do, to check the children's homework and to show some interest in their children's work. Children need to see parents care and that they are proud of them when they study and work hard. Children's television "hours," video games and time spent outside should be monitored and they should be encouraged to study and read extracurricular books. Children need to be taught that reading and learning can be fun. Studying could even be rewarded.

Once the child has the desire to learn, he/she should excel in school. It must be kept in mind, though, that there must be

discipline, not only in the classroom but also at home. Children must be raised to respect education, to respect teachers and to respect authority. Order must be ingrained in the society so it can move towards success.

Take for example public places. When people are waiting in hospitals, in pharmacies, at grocery stores, at restaurants or school cafeterias, they fight over who comes first. They do not queue in a neat, orderly, courteous manner. They have no patience. This is not the kind of behaviour we want to teach our children.

What I am saying is that we must, at national level, encourage more order and less chaos even during the smallest activities of the day. People must be encouraged to respect each other.

The environment we live in must be changed into a more positive one that will encourage all to live as productive, happy and successful individuals. Israeli Moshe Dayan said about thirty years ago that "when the Arabs learn to stand in a straight line at a bus stop, then we will be defeated."

We need to remember our past history. The Arabs — the Muslims — once created a "Golden Age" that encouraged education. People from all over Europe came to Cordoba and Cairo to study. The language of education was Arabic. At that time, Europe was just coming out of ignorance and the Dark Ages. Arabs gave Europe its renaissance.

If we were once able to flourish, why can't we do so again? I believe that only through education and religion can society devel-

op. We need to have confidence in ourselves, learn to work hard and change some things in our way of thinking. If people are educated in the right way and with the right tools: discipline, hard work and the right to dream, then many great things can be achieved. Then, only, will it be possible to improve education.

To achieve such a metamorphosis of the society, both discipline and education should be promoted. A national campaign could be launched while schools should enforce discipline and orderliness, beginning with the young, to teach them the right way from the beginning.

As far as education is concerned, it must be ensured that all children attend school and try to raise the cultural and intellectual level of the whole

society. There is no need to import this; we can dig into the Arab reserves. There are many good Arab writers, playwrights and artists. There are talented people in Jordan.

Scholarships should be given to encourage academics as well as talents. More cultural activities should be supported and planned. Model U.N. clubs could be formed in schools and universities. More competitions and prizes should be given in schools and universities. More technical schools should be built, and testing should be done from the elementary to secondary levels to determine the strengths of the students in order to steer them into the field of their natural aptitude.

Learning should also be made more fun by using posters, videos, field trips, guest speakers and many

other activities that centre around education. Instead of sightseeing trips, students should visit museums, historical sites and factories or other places that will increase their knowledge of the world around them. The new generation of teachers can combine old techniques, which have great value, with new techniques. We should never throw away the old, unless it has absolutely no benefit; we should build onto what we have.

If we make education and our future a priority, I am sure we can come up with more ideas and can make Jordan an altogether greater society.

The writer has an MA in English literature from Virginia Tech University, U.S. She contributed the above article to the Jordan Times.

Frozen water found on the moon, reviving a dream

By Brian Knowlton

WASHINGTON — The prospects for a human outpost on the moon appeared to have been improved with the discovery of what the Pentagon has said seemed to be an enormous lake of frozen water at the bottom of the biggest crater in the solar system.

Pentagon scientists said radar soundings by the Clementine, an unmanned spacecraft, had confirmed the existence of a large mass of ice in an area that is in permanent shadow near the lunar south pole.

That immense shadow creates bitterly cold temperatures that would have prevented the ice from evaporating but also had prevented scientists from peering into the huge crater.

Some independent scientists have said that more data was needed to confirm the finding. But Stephen Maran, spokesman for the American Astronomical Society, gave his support to the report and said the Clementine scientists "certainly didn't rush to judgement."

He and other scientists called the finding enormously exciting, saying: "This has got to give a big boost to the people who favour a lunar base."

Scientists at the Pentagon's Ballistic Missile Defence Organisation, the agency that launched the Clementine, said their radar soundings of the moon's polar areas had convinced them that the substance in the deep polar crater was

frozen water, not some other substance. They found nothing at the northern pole nor in another southern area that was exposed to the sun.

The ballistic missile organisation carries out "star wars" research, and the Clementine's chief mission was to test anti-missile technology far from the Earth's surface. The data was collected in mid-1995, and the craft is now in a useless orbit around the sun.

The southern crater, known as the Aitkin basin, is 12 kilometres deep, which makes it the deepest crater yet discovered in the solar system.

The apparent ice lake is estimated to be tens of feet deep and to cover a total area of 30 to 50 square miles — "probably enough to run a large colony," said Alan Boss, an astrophysicist with the Carnegie Institution in Washington.

Rocks brought back from the moon by the six American Apollo missions were extremely dry and contained relatively small numbers of minerals, giving no evidence of water on the lunar surface. Despite those findings, speculation has persisted for decades that at least some water exists on the moon.

Signs of water have been found on other planets in the solar system, even on blistering hot Mercury.

The presence of water on the moon, Pentagon scientists said, probably points to an enormous collision with a comet, perhaps 3.6 billion years ago. Comets are made mainly of frozen water but

also contain methane, ammonia and other elements. A polar lake thus would not change the notion of the moon as basically bone-dry.

But a water source on the moon would make it far easier for man to live there in large numbers and for extended periods. Such water could also be converted, through electrolysis, into its component parts — hydrogen and oxygen — creating a source of breathable air.

And hydrogen and oxygen are essential elements of rocket fuel, meaning the moon could provide an effective launching pad for new space exploration efforts, some scientists said.

"If you could wish for any one thing there to make it easier to explore with, it would be water," said Anthony Cook, astronomical observer at the Griffith Observatory in Los Angeles.

Having to haul water from Earth would greatly limit the size of a lunar colony and vastly inflate its cost. "With water there," Mr Cook said, "you could have enclosed areas to grow plants, grow your own food, make your own fuel, make your own air."

Clementine, launched at a relatively modest cost of \$75 million, irradiated portions of the moon's poles. The reflected radar signals, received by enormous antennas on Earth, were similar to radar signals bounced off lakes on this planet, scientists said. Stewart Nozette of Lawrence

Livermore Laboratory, which was involved in the project, said that though water ice was "the most probable" explanation, that would not be ultimately confirmed until samples could be collected. No mission to do so is planned.

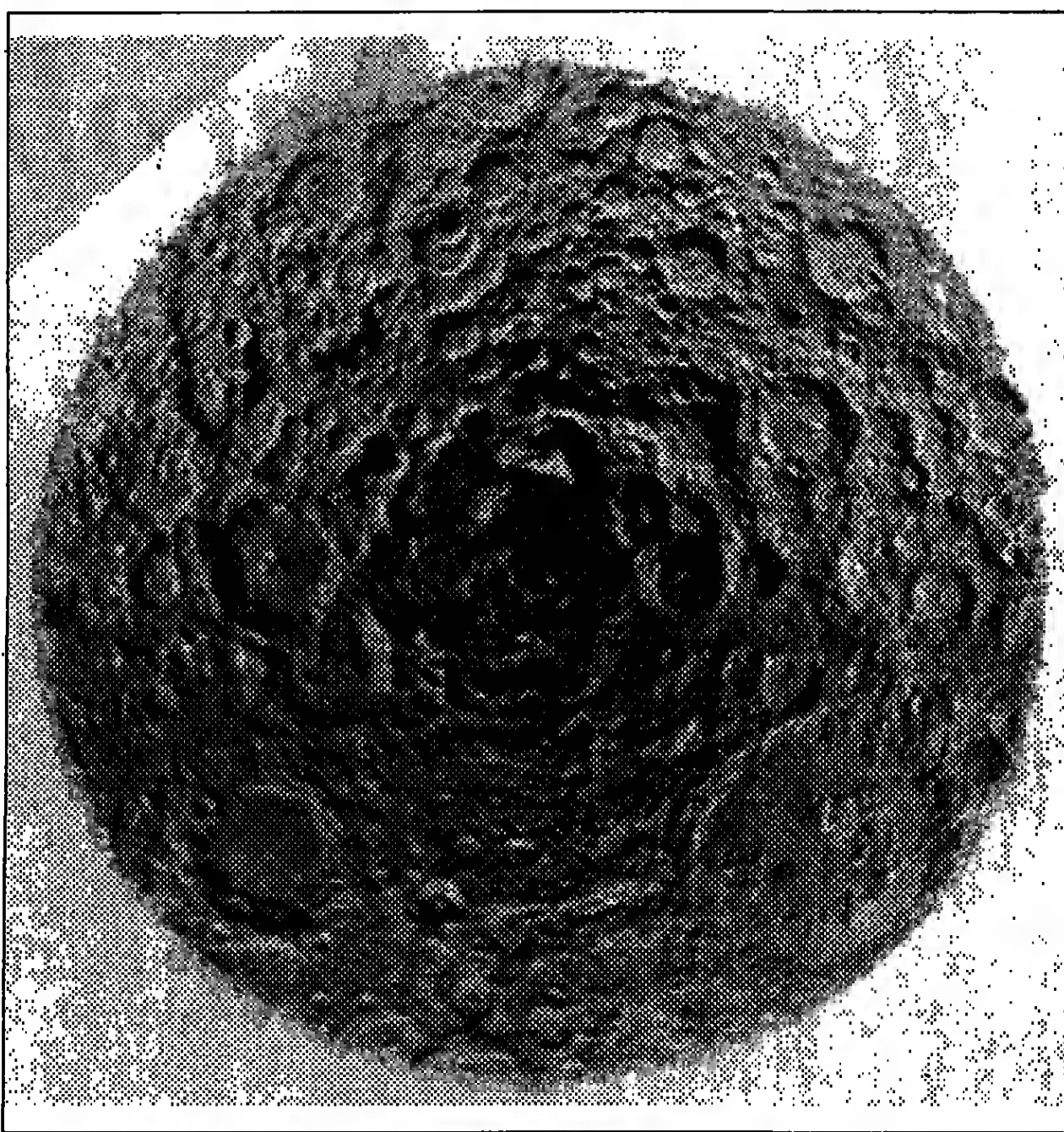
But a NASA satellite set for launch next October is to scan the moon with an instrument that should provide a definitive answer to whether water is present, said Kelly Beatty, senior editor of Sky and Telescope magazine.

Because the crater in the southern polar region is so deep and in an area where the sun shines at a low angle, its bottom is permanently in shadow. But the Clementine's radar also found an area rising from the crater that is high enough to remain in sunshine 85 per cent of the time. Solar panels could be erected there, said Paul Spudis, a scientist with the Lunar and Planetary Institute, to provide energy to melt lunar ice.

"This may be the most valuable piece of real estate in the solar system," Mr Spudis said. "We could build a filling station on the moon."

Even if the water were too impure for drinking, said Mr. Maran of the American Astronomical Society, it could be used for hygiene, cleaning and industrial processes and for making brick, concrete, adobe and cement.

International Herald Tribune



The crater in the centre of the southern polar region harbours frozen water

Well-being of citizens, dignity priority #1 — Prince Hassan

(Continued from page 1)

Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour, as well as the ministers of public works, municipal and rural affairs, water and irrigation and social development said: "This Wadi Araba region must be made to be productive and we must start working to make sure that our management of national resources is sound and efficient."

"We have to utilise our efforts in a manner to serve our national cause and the common good, and not for personal interests. This way we will be serving the nation in a most positive manner," said the Crown Prince adding: "We have to distinguish between what is spiritual and what is material."

After that a dialogue took place between the Crown Prince and the concerned ministers on the one hand and the representatives of the local community on the other in which they discussed a number of issues relating to their region.

In remarks at the meeting, Prince Hassan underlined the need for scientific methodology in assessing local people's needs and said: "I hope the social

councils will work hand-in-hand with the people and the government to achieve our target of providing every Jordanian with a dignified life. The approach at this point is to achieve comprehensive development through intersectoral cooperation."

Referring to the development of the Jordan Valley as a whole he said: "We hope the dividends of peace will soon materialise and the Jordan Valley will soon prosper."

He said Wadi Araba will soon witness the construction of main roads linking Aqaba with the Jordan Valley and there will be railway lines linking Jordan with Israel and other neighbouring countries. All these projects will be carried out within a collective strategy resulting from the peace process.

Commenting on the discussion, that took place between the ministers and the local community representatives, Prince Hassan said: "This transparent and frank discussion point to the achievements we have made. Let us channel our efforts towards serving public interests. What is required of you is to coordinate among each other and agree on priorities. The discussion we are hav-

ing is a responsible dialogue that reflects our joint responsibility towards public interests and our country. Let us identify the truth and overcome the negative elements."

Prince Hassan made field trips to water wells in Dahab, Rishah and Salama areas where the ministry of water and irrigation is conducting experiments on deep artesian wells. He listened to a briefing by Minister of Water and Irrigation Munther Haddadin on the government's efforts to ensure a better utilisation of water resources and launch agricultural development.

He also visited the Gharandal area and met with its residents.

At the Wadi Araba district, Prince Hassan met with representatives of the public and private sectors and stressed the need for perpetual contacts between officials and the public, saying that this will be for the common good.

In remarks at the meeting, he stressed the need for planning to be transparent and clear for all.

Representatives of the local community presented their views to the ministers accompanying Prince Hassan and aired their com-

plaints and problems. The ministers provided answers to the queries.

Following the meetings, Prince Hassan visited the Abdul Hameed Sharaf Brigade and the army units stationed in the area where he listened to the units commander explaining efforts by the Armed Forces to contribute to the development process.

The commander spoke of such efforts as building roads, finding new water resources and other activities as well as efforts in the areas of health and education.

In remarks to the Armed Forces, Prince Hassan stressed the need for cooperation between the Armed Forces and the government in order to further utilise the resources of the army in the development process.

"I would like to stress that in the field of human resources, there must be a contractual arrangement between the ministry of education and the Armed Forces schools."

Towards the end of the tour, Prince Hassan visited Al Hussein Ben Ali High School in Qureira where he inspected its services to the local community.

U.S. to raise aid sum to Jordan; Anani holds talks with officials

(Continued from page 1)

ident Bill Clinton in April. State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns recently said that "the President and Secretary (of State Madeleine) Albright have been seeking ways to provide substantial American economic assistance to Jordan."

"We are looking for ways that we might assist those nations who are willing to take risk for peace," Mr. Burns said last month.

He added that there were several options being debated by the U.S. administration to make the additional amount available, adding that any decision should be approved by the U.S. Congress.

Meanwhile, the Jordanian delegation visiting Washington has delivered on Friday a message from His Majesty King Hussein to U.S. President Bill Clinton, Jordan News Agency (Petra) said Saturday.

Petra said the message was delivered during a meeting between Dr. Anani and Samuel Burger, President Clinton's national security advisor.

Petra added that Dr. Anani has conveyed the King's greetings to the U.S. president and discussed with Mr. Burger "latest developments in the peace process and bilateral relations."

Dr. Anani, accompanied by Foreign Minister Fawaz Tarawneh and Minister of Planning Rima Khalaf, also met with Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and discussed bilateral relations and the peace process.

During the meeting, which was attended by U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East Dennis Ross, the two sides reviewed Jordan's economic policy. Ms. Albright stressed the importance of American support to the Kingdom and "praised His Majesty's effective role in peace making in the region."

Dr. Mutawi said that the delegation, which includes Minister of Tourism Akel Baltaji, will discuss tourism issues as well as hold talks with World Bank officials.

Arafat in Egypt to discuss peace plan

(Continued from page 1)

for an agreed period of time.

— A full Palestinian commitment to guarantee Israeli security.

— A full Israeli commitment to implement all the terms of past autonomy accords, including the opening of the Gaza airport, the road linking Gaza to the West Bank and a port.

— The immediate start in final status negotiations in parallel with the implementation of the autonomy accords.

The official warned however: "The two sides are still far apart concerning a halt to settlement construction despite Egyptian efforts to narrow the gap between Israel and the Palestinians."

Egypt has been spearheading efforts over the past few weeks to get the negotiations back on track and Mr. Mubarak's top political advisor Osama Al Baz shuttled between Israeli and Palestinian

leaders before flying Monday to Washington for talks with U.S. officials.

On Wednesday the European Union (EU) envoy for the Middle East, Miguel Angel Moratinos, said there were signs of an imminent resolution of the crisis.

"There is a slight opening on the part of the Israeli prime minister and a willingness to break the deadlock," Mr. Moratinos told reporters in Cairo after talks with Egyptian officials.

The Palestinians insist on a halt to Jewish settlement building on occupied land before they will return to the negotiating table.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, for his part, calls for a Palestinian crackdown on militants opposed to the peace process, and has proposed fast-track negotiations on a final peace settlement which is due to come into effect in May 1999.

JORDAN TIMES
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Jordan to invest \$3b in free zone

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Jordan is planning to pump nearly \$3 billion to turn its southern port of Aqaba into a free zone to attract capital as part of reforms.

Deputy Prime Minister Jawad Anani said the cabinet had approved the project following a long delay and set up a committee to oversee its implementation.

"The Aqaba is one of the giant projects in Jordan. It includes the construction of railways, tourist areas, and rehabilitation of the port and the infrastructure," Dr. Anani told the United Arab Emirates economic weekly Emirates Today in an interview published Saturday.

"The cost of the project is estimated at around \$3 billion, to be invested over nine years. The project will create job opportunities, boost exports and greatly benefit the Jordanian economy," the deputy prime minister said.

Dr. Anani said his government was chalking out a timetable for carrying out the project in Aqaba.

About Jordan's debt, he said it had been cut to around \$6 billion in 1996 from \$6.6 billion in 1995 because of rescheduling of debts to major creditors and a growth in exports to Arab Gulf states.

But he added the debt could rise by \$1.5 billion over the next two years before it starts to climb down later.

"There are some debts which will be due this month but will be postponed to June 2000. This period is enough to complete the reform programme in 1998, when Jordan will reach a high degree of economic performance," he said.

Mideast trade, investment hit by peace pause

BEIRUT (R) — Trade and investment in the Middle East are experiencing "hesitation and stagnation" due to the halt in the Arab-Israeli peace process, a senior official of the International Chambers of Commerce (ICC) said Friday.

Maria Cattani, secretary-general of the world business organisation, told a news conference in Beirut the advent of the peace process caused an enormous surge of interest in the region but this had now levelled off.

"We have seen perhaps a certain reflex of hesitation and a stagnation," Ms. Cattani said in reply to a question.

"I would hesitate to say that we've seen a decline in regional trade. I haven't seen a full decline, I've seen a besitization on the part of the international business community," she added.

ICC Vice President Adnan Kassar, who is chairman of Fransabank, a leading Lebanese bank, told the news conference that investment interest had also levelled off.

"It's going down a little bit," Mr. Kassar said. "We do not see at this moment that there is big interest in investment in the region due to the fact that the peace process has been stopped for some time."

He said Lebanon had special characteristics which were causing some investors to remain interested in it. "But still, there is a certain slackness in the market and we feel that," Mr. Kassar added.

Yemen enters new phase of reforms

SANAA (AFP) — Yemen is set to embark on a new phase of its structural reforms backed by the World Bank after crossing a milestone in revamping the economy.

A World Bank delegation, after three days of talks, decided to lend Yemen \$80 million to encourage its reforms in the banking and financial sectors, a Yemeni official has said.

An official of the World Bank said phase three will give commercial banks a greater role in development and strengthen that of specialised banks in farming and trade.

"Yemen has managed to stem the deterioration in the economy thanks to the reforms of the last two years," said Omer Yucer, development aid coordinator for the United Nations.

"Rapid implementation by the government has saved the day and restored confidence in Yemen's economy," he said.

"There is monetary stability now. Yemen has overcome its budget deficit and the government announced at the end of 1996 that the growth rate has reached seven per cent," slightly lower than its target of 7.2, Mr. Yucer noted.

Parliament is debating the programme of new Prime Minister Faraj Ibn Ghanem, a trained economist who submitted his planned reforms recently.

The new government formed after April 27 elections is made up primarily of

members of President Ali Abdullah Saleh's party.

Al Islah, an Islamist party which has tried to block some reforms, was dropped from the cabinet.

The Arabian Peninsula country, one of the world's poorest, embarked on the reforms in March 1995 in coordination with both the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

In two phases, the government has slashed petrol and flour subsidies while raising tariffs for services such as electricity, telephone and water. It has also partly reformed the customs and the fiscal systems.

The third phase calls for a total lifting in 1998 of subsidies on flour and wheat, a drain on state coffers at \$400 million a year, as well as on oil derivatives and services.

Some 35,000 state employees are slated to lose their jobs in a trimming down of the bureaucracy, while other spending is to be rationalised and the banking system reformed.

Inflation fell from 80 per cent in early 1995 to 25 per cent in 1996. It is expected to drop below 10 per cent this year, according to estimates of international institutes.

The exchange rate of the rial, meanwhile, has stabilised at 125 to the dollar since February 1995, and the deficit cut to 1.7 per cent of gross domestic product in the 1997 budget, or 10 times lower than in 1994.

In the banking sector, deposits have soared 47 per cent and the central bank built up reserves of around \$7 billion at the end of 1996.

But the population has paid a heavy price for the reforms and demonstrations broke out in March 1995 when prices were suddenly doubled for petrol and services.

An economic body chaired by Mr. Ghanem stressed that work must continue to set up a structure — estimated to cost \$80 million — to compensate the poorest sectors of society.

Yemen is estimated to have already received more than \$430 million from the World Bank and IMF, on top of aid from Arab and European countries.

REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	FRF	ITL	ESP	GRD
US Dollar	1.7285	0.8144	1.4444	110.18	1.3760	1698.40	1.9455	5.3310	
DE Mark	0.5782	1.0000	0.6348	57.19	0.7951	981.51	1.1249	3.3728	
GB Sterling	1.6276	2.3168	1.0000	2.3512	169.06	2.2396	2764.66	3.1860	9.4669
CH Franc	0.8823	119.30	0.6242	1.0000	0.9505	1175.38	134.47	4.0294	
JP Yen	0.0086	1.4440	0.5282	1.2446	1.0000	141.41	167.42	5.0187	
CA Dollar	0.7267	1.2327	0.4447	1.0282	1.18	1214.82	1.3962	4.1603	
IT Lira	0.0008	1.0171	0.3162	0.0851	1444.34	0.8094	11.45	3.4369	
NL Guilder	0.0140	88.85	0.3163	74.31	59.85	0.7066	572.19	2.9950	
FR Franc	0.1715	0.2365	0.1053	24.781	19.29	0.2350	33.37	33.3700	

Middle Eastern Currencies									
	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	FRF	ITL	ESP	GRD
US Dollar	1.7285	0.8144	1.4444	110.18	1.3760	1698.40	1.9455	5.3310	
Jordan Dinar	1.4124	5.2872	0.5324	5.1410	0.4277	5.1871	2170.20	4.7874	
GB Sterling	0.2666	0.1888	0.1005	0.97	0.0807	0.98	409.89	0.9038	
Bahrain Dinar	2.45	1.8781	5.9488	8.66	0.8032	8.74	4078.02	8.9913	
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1945	1.0304	1.0304	0.8832	1.01	422.14	0.9312	
Kuwait Dinar	3.3028	2.3382	12.8517	1.2449	1.02	12.13	5074.31	0.9312	
Emirate Dinar	0.2723	0.1928	1.0212	1.0208	0.8825	1.01	418.38	0.9229	
Lebanese 1000	0.46	0.4608	2.4489	0.3483	2.3689	0.1971	2.3902	2.2080	
Egyptian	0.2450	0.2089	1.1065	0.1112	1.0739	0.0893	1.0835	453.32	

Energy									
	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	FRF	ITL	ESP	GRD
Brent	10.75	18.30							
WT. Tena	28.38	20.30							
Bonny	18.75	18.90							
Dubai	18.10	18.18							
UL Gas	0.00	208.00							


Metal Prices									
	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	FRF	ITL	ESP	GRD
Gold (oz's)	341.7	342.2							
Silver (oz's)	4.74	4.76							
Platinum (oz's)	425	435							
AL (3 Months)	1590	1592							
CU (3 Months)	2473	2474							
Zinc (3 Months)	1348	1348							
Lead (3 Months)	825	827							
Ni (3 Months)	7150	7160							

Main Equity Indices									
	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pr. Cls		
New York	DOW JONES	7306.14	-12.01	-0.16	7312.15	7280.22	7312.15		
New York	S&P 500	843.45	-2.03	-0.24	845.31	840.95	845.48		
London	FT-SE 100	4557.1	-0.7	-0.02	4565.9	4553.3	4557.8		
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	20411.56	48.4	0.24	20707.8	20512.3	20563.2		
Paris	CAC 40	2635.37	10.88	0.41	2644.22	2613.25	2624.49		
Frankfurt	DAX	3661.84	36.1	1	3669.12	3644.34	3625.74		

Energy									
	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	FRF	ITL	ESP	GRD
Coffee (ciba)	280.33								
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1487								
Sugar (\$/cwt)	333.1								
Wheat (\$/ton)	151								
Soya (\$/cwt)	23.8								
Tee (\$/kg)	155								
Barley (\$/sh)	8								
Rice (\$/ton)	450								

JOD Cross Rates									
	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	FRF	ITL	ESP	GRD
US Dollar	0.708	0.710							
GB Sterling	1.1589	1.1617							
DE Mark	0.409	0.411							
CH Franc	0.4915	0.494							
JP Yen	0.1213	0.1210							
FR Franc	0.5083	0.5113							
NL Guilder	0.3635	0.3652							
IT Lira	0.4161	0.4182							

Source: Central Bank of Jordan.



**JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY CO. LTD.,
AMMAN - JORDAN**

**TENDER INVITATION FOR BIDDING
NO. 98/97 LPG CYLINDERS**

Jordan Petroleum Refinery Co. Ltd., announces tender invitation No. 98/97 for the supply of LPG Cylinders with the following two alternatives quantities 200,000 CYL., 300,000 CYL.

Companies who wish to participate in the above tender are invited to obtain tender documents before 12:30 hrs from the company's head office at the First Circle-Jabal Amman, against a non-refundable JD 140 per set.

A bid bond equals 5% of the offer amount valid for 120 days should be submitted with the offers.

Commercial and technical offers should be submitted in separate sealed envelopes.

Offers must be submitted at the company's head office not later than 12:00 hrs of Sunday 20.7.97

Chairman

Peanuts









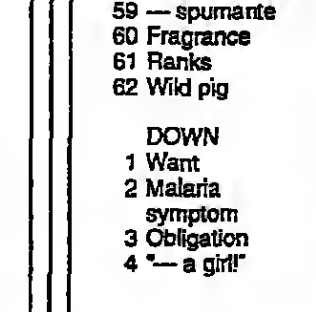
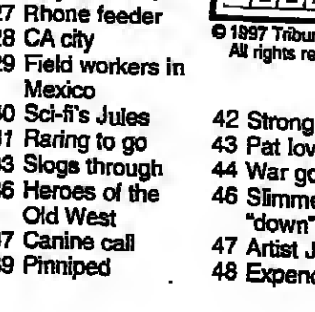


Andy Capp





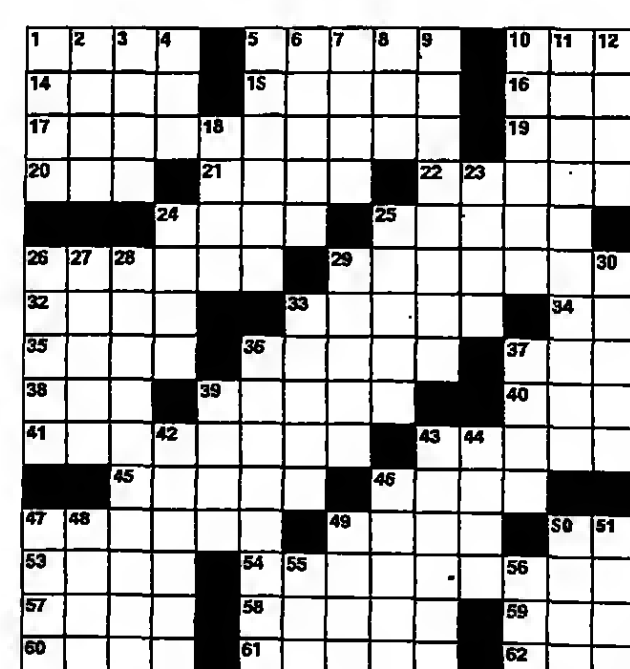
Mutt'n'Jeff

THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS

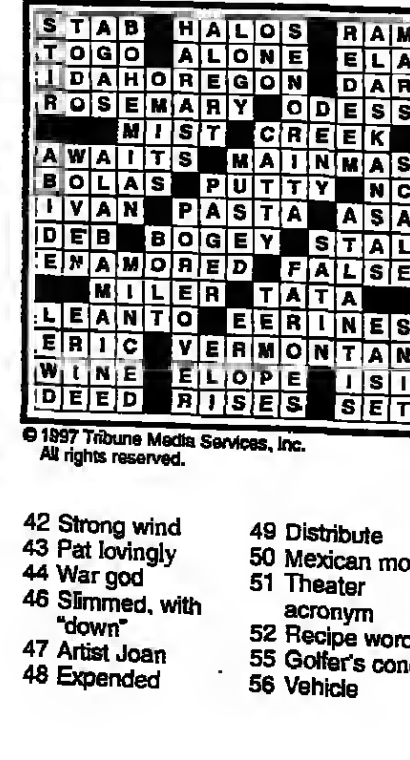
- African army
- River through Pakistan
- Author Sholem
- "... a kick..."
- Beta
- Large fish
- Inherent
- Follow closely
- up (excited)
- Digits
- "If" - treason...
- Blend
- Gauntlet
- Bet to lose every trick, in cards
- Keep
- "... a ship sailing..."
- Bosc and Bartlett
- Irritant for a princess?
- Sleuths
- Vegas machines
- Mass of ice
- Goof
- Stood out
- Comedian
- Meara
- Algae
- Former president
- Rick of auto racing
- Use a garage
- Breakfast cereal
- Delfy
- de deux
- Contraction
- Blooming
- Network of nerves
- Registers to run
- spumante
- Fragrance
- Blanks
- Wild pig



DOWN

- Want
- Malaria symptom
- Obligation
- "... a girl"
- Part of a shoe
- Eminent
- Iran
- Coffee server
- Pioneers
- On the go
- Imaginary beast
- Baby's place
- Predicament
- Brain passage
- TV role for Dan Blocker
- Secluded neighborhood
- Rasp
- Tiny amounts
- Rhine feeder
- CA city
- Field workers in Mexico
- Sci-fi's Jules
- Raring to go
- Slogs through
- Heroes of the Old West
- Canine call
- Pinniped
- Strong wind
- Pat lovingly
- War god
- Slimmed, with "down"
- Artist Joan
- Expended
- Distribute
- Mexican money
- Theater acronym
- Recipe word
- Golf's concern
- Vehicle

Saturday's Puzzle solved:



**HOROSCOPE
FORECAST FOR
SUNDAY, JUNE 8,
1997**

By Thomas S. Pierson,
Astrologer, Carroll
Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Stay at home during the morning today, and catch up on all those little chores you have been putting off. Later this evening, however, go out with your friends for some fun activities which everyone will enjoy.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Make some down-to-earth plans for the days ahead and thereby you can meet with fellow associates. Be sure to avoid getting involved in a disagreement between two of your good friends which could be detrimental.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Enjoy the company of your friends and fellow associates for some recreational activities today. You should not allow a sulky person to ruin your good mood later this evening which is important to your peace of mind.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) This is a good day today to tackle home repair tasks, whether small or large, and thereby get good results. Entertain friends at home later this evening by being the perfect host and make them feel quite comfortable.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You'll have some free time today, so use it to gather the information you'll need to handle a project in the days ahead. Be sure to pay your bill and thereby you won't be behind in your financial responsibilities.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) If you have a project in mind for later this evening, get the backing of your loved ones and it can be fun instead of being so much of a chore. This is a good time today to seek out the advice of a bigwig for your career activities.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Set aside some time today to revise your budget and make it more realistic. This is a good time later this evening to contact your old friends on the telephone and make plans to get together for recreational activities.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Remember to use your past experiences as a guide to keep you from making the same mistakes twice. Be considerate to your mate by doing something special for him or her which will be very much appreciated.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) If you decide to throw in with some friends today on a project, be sure to do your share of the career activities. Discuss your plans with your mate so that he or she will feel completely involved in your business venture.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Pay no attention to the grumbling of an old friend today, since you know exactly what you are doing. Use your spare time later this evening to complete a method which can make you successful in the days ahead.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) A new contact can give you some good ideas today which will help you to progress more quickly. Don't turn down an offer of assistance later this evening from fellow associates for completing a new project.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Make sure you know exactly what your responsibilities are today, and attend to them conscientiously. Stay at home with your loved ones later this evening and plan to participate in recreational activities which are fun.

Birthstone of June:
Pearl — Moon Stone

Lebanese business leader sees resumption of ties with Iraq

BEIRUT (AFP) — Lebanon could soon resume ties with Iraq to rebuild bilateral trade, in line with a similar move by Syria, a Lebanese business leader forecast Saturday.

"The official resumption of Lebanese exports to Iraq requires the reestablishment of diplomatic ties," which were broken in 1994, said Jacques Sarraf, president of the Lebanese Industrial Association.

"We are advancing in that direction and we expect some good news soon," Mr. Sarraf said in an interview with AFP.

In April a Lebanese trade delegation visited Iraq hoping to secure contracts under the U.N. oil-for-food deal, under which Baghdad can sell limited amounts of oil to raise money to buy food and medicine.

The visit was the first since the Gulf crisis in 1990-1991.

Mr. Sarraf said he hoped Lebanese exports to Iraq would reach \$150 million this year.

Lebanon severed relations with Iraq after the 1994 assassination of an Iraqi dissident in Beirut. Baghdad has denied any connection with the killing. Beirut recently tried to

resurrect ties with Baghdad, starting with the release and expulsion in January of three Iraqi diplomats imprisoned in connection with the 1994 murder.

However, diplomats in Beirut doubt whether there will be any resumption of relations before a similar move by Syria, which dominates Lebanon politically and whose ties with Iraq were severed in 1980.

A delegation of Syrian businessmen visited Iraq last month in a move some Arab diplomats said could lead to a rapprochement between Damascus and Baghdad.

But Syrian Vice President Abdul Halim Khaddam said Thursday that the

resumption of trade with Iraq "had no political connotations."

Officials said Friday that Lebanon has invited an Iraqi trade and economic delegation to visit in a new attempt to reactivate trade relations between the two countries.

Adnan Kassar, chairman of the Beirut Chamber of Commerce, extended the invitation to Zuhair Abdul Ghaffur Yunis, chairman of the League of Iraqi Chambers of Commerce, to visit with an economic delegation.

The visit is to be followed by a similar trip to Iraq by Lebanese businessmen from various economic sectors, the officials said.

Gulf Arabs seek stake in Housing Bank

AMMAN (R) — Arab Gulf investors are interested in acquiring a stake in Housing Bank under a share offering aimed at doubling its capital to JD50 million (\$70.6 million), the bank's general manager has said.

Abdul Qader Dweik also said the government's new share issue committee agreed to a five dinar (\$7) per share pricing for the new 25 million shares to be offered in the private placement.

The shares hold one dinar nominal value and a four dinar premium.

"We are in talks with Arab financial institutions to participate in the new issue and we are examining the situation," he told Reuters.

The bank hopes to complete the offering in two months after it is endorsed by a board meeting later in June.

Bank officials say a wider Arab Gulf investor base could help the bank expand its regional client base and provide it with so far untapped business opportunities in the oil rich producing area.

Housing Bank will become Jordan's biggest bank in terms of shareholders equity after its capital rise lifts shareholders' rights to around JD210 million (\$297 million) from a current JD81.3 million.

"It will provide us with the resources to expand our financing role," said Mr. Dweik.

Shareholders approved last month a doubling of the bank's capital to JD50 million (\$70.6 million) and authorized its board to go ahead with a private placement from existing shareholders along with subscriptions from local and foreign investors.

But the bank has also not ruled out a GDR (global depository receipt) issue as an option for the capital rise, bankers say.

"We have offers for GDRs, it is one of the options which we are considering," Mr. Dweik said.

The bank wants a capital hike to compete more aggressively both in the local market and regionally after a new law passed recently widened its scope of operations to comprehensive commercial banking.

"We plan to increase our commercial activity... the bank wants to prepare itself for the coming period of increased demand on development projects in the region," Mr. Dweik said.

Housing Bank's strategic focus is to expand into comprehensive banking away from its original real estate credit niche along with widening its investment and private banking business for its clients in capital markets.

"The bank wants to increase its overall market share," said Mr. Dweik.

The bank already has Arab and foreign investors including Kuwait with a 20 per cent stake and equal six

per cent stakes by Oman, Qatar and Iran. Jordan's government owns 18 per cent.

Meanwhile, banking sources said that the Housing Bank has concluded a deal to sell half of its fully owned five-star Fort Grand Hotel to a group of Arab Gulf investors.

They said the Jordanian government, which is a minority shareholder in the bank, has approved the sale of the 50 per cent stake in the 306-room five-star hotel.

The hotel is managed by global hotel chain Fort-Le Meridien.

Housing Bank officials declined to disclose the cost of the deal but financial analysts estimate the total assets of the hotel at around JD30 million (\$42 million).

The bank remains the largest single, non-government investor on Jordan's stock market. It also has extensive holdings in a wide range of industrial and real estate firms.

Housing Bank's total assets stood at JD1.136 billion by the end of 1996 and its deposits stood at JD918 million. It is the Kingdom's second largest bank.

Mercedes to open its first Arab World car plant in Egypt

CAIRO (AFP) — German car maker Daimler-Benz AG has announced the setting up of a new assembly plant in Egypt for its best-selling Mercedes E-200 sedan car, the company's first factory in an Arab country.

"We chose Egypt to set up our first assembly line in the Arab World because of its political and economic development," said Daimler-Benz Vice-President Hartmut Buehler.

"As a consequence of its strong economic possibilities and the ever-rising standard of living, its open-door policy and the removal of import licence barriers, we have decided to enter a direct investment in Egypt," he said.

Mr. Daimler has taken a 26 per cent stake in the Egyptian German Automotive Co. (EGAC) joint venture with private Egyptian firms NATCO (72 per cent) and NAGRA (two per cent).

Mercedes will be competing for a share of the growing Egyptian market with other car makers Peugeot, Skoda, Citroen, Suzuki, Opel, Fiat, Jeep and Hyundai which already have assembly plants in Egypt.

Fellow German manufacturer BMW also makes its

own foray on the Egyptian market later in June when it inaugurates the first locally assembled BMW 523i.

EGAC hopes to assemble 2,500 Mercedes E-class cars a year, with the first batch expected to roll off the assembly line before the end of 1997, company officials said.

EGAC Chairman Sami Saad said the joint venture had a paid up capital of 60 million pounds (\$18 million) and a total investment of 150 million pounds (\$44 million).

The plant, to be located in the industrial October 6th City, north of Cairo, will employ 207 workers initially and can be expanded to produce 10,000 units if two assembly lines are operated round-the-clock, Mr. Saad said.

The car assembled in Egypt will cost 298,000 pounds (around \$99,300), a fortune compared with the average monthly salary here of around \$100.

Mr. Buehler said the cars assembled in Egypt could be exported to other Arab countries "depending on developments in the region and the tariff structure in neighbouring countries."

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Woollen Industries Company boosts gross profit by 64%

** THE WOOLLEN Industries Company was able to boost gross profit from sales by 64 per cent, or JD110,000 as the amount increased from JD173,000 in 1995 to JD283,000 by the end of last year. As a result, the net profit went up from JD23,600 in 1995 to JD118,300 in 1996 and enabled the company to distribute JD100,000 in cash dividends at a rate of 10 per cent following the approval of the general assembly.

Board Chairman Jamil Maragah attributed the rise in profit to improved marketing efforts and better cost management. He told the general assembly that the gains were not easy to achieve especially in a climate of general recession and weak purchasing power for most consumers. He also mentioned the continued closure of the Iraqi market and the stiff competition from foreign firms, which manufacture similar products.

Dr. Maragah explained that customs were cancelled or reduced on foreign-made products but the government did not, in turn, exempt from customs the raw material or industrial inputs used by Jordanian companies for local production. The chairman was not all negative about the government as he highlighted the reduction of income tax from 38 per cent to 15 per cent as an important positive factor that optimised the share of profit that goes to the shareholders.

The chairman outlined the company's objectives for 1997 by pointing out that the target would be to produce no less than 100,000 blankets with the focus for 60 per cent to 70 per cent of the production on "mink" blankets of all sizes. Other plans include intensifying contacts with consumers, participating in trade fairs and following up on latest technological developments in the quality of equipment and machinery in order to introduce it in the company's operations.

According to the 1996 annual report, the company had JD1.9 million in total assets at the end of last year (Al Ra'i + Al Aswaq).

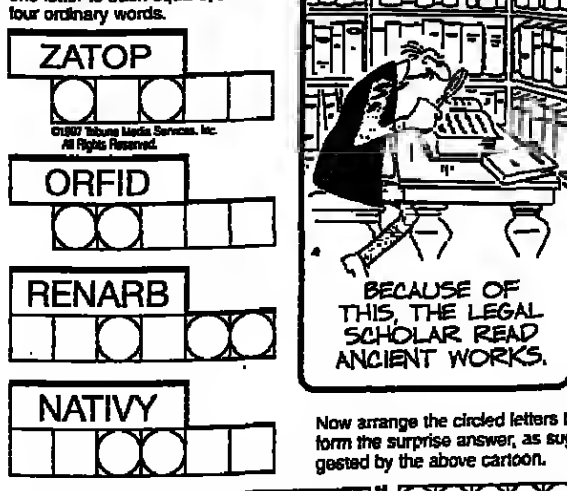
THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



"I had 37 cups of coffee today. To be safe, I switched to decaf after #35."



JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

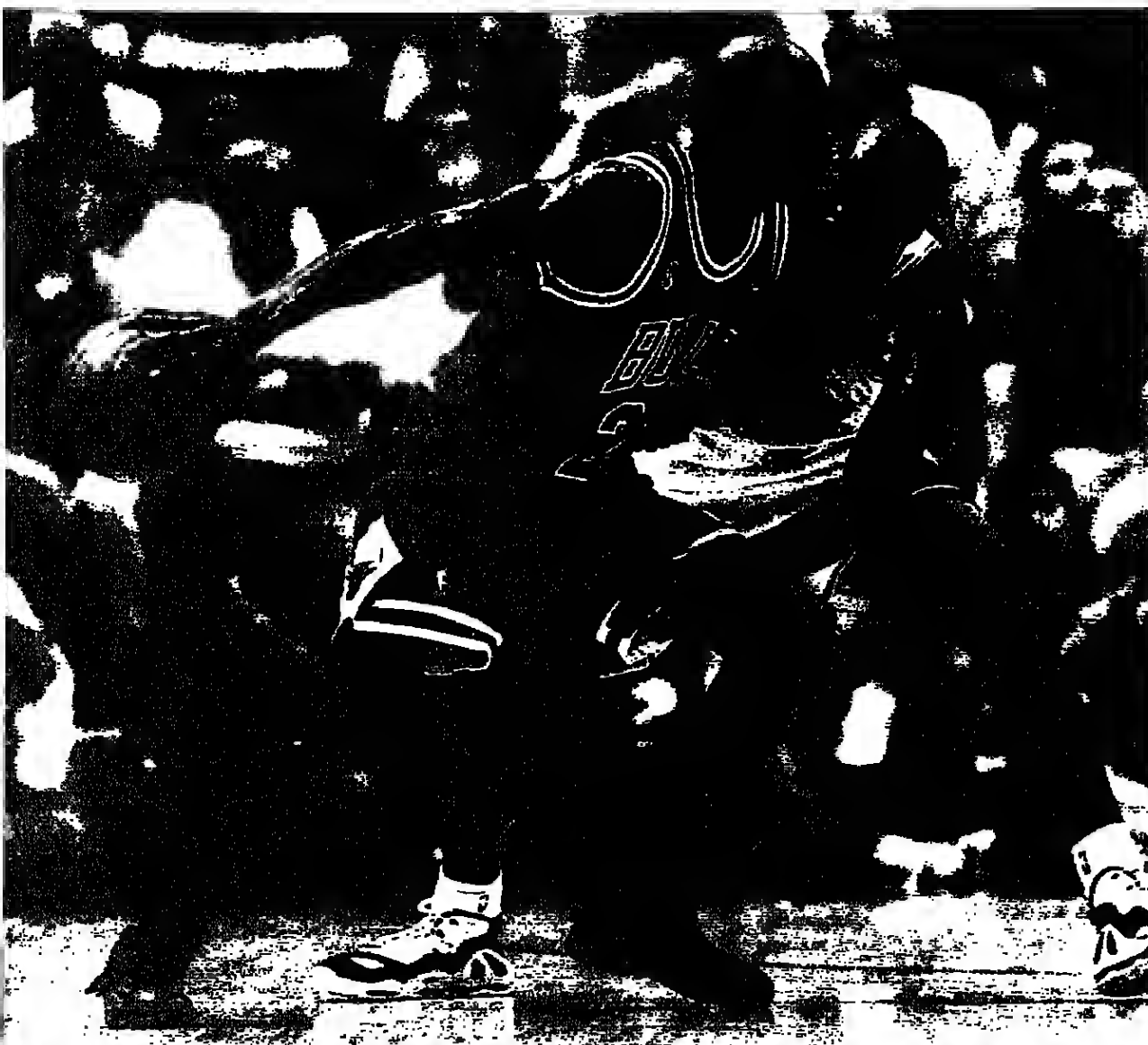
Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Answer here: THE "O O O O" (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: DEITY WAFER TYRANT JOVIAL
Answer: When they decided to get married it was - RITE, NOW!

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK OFFER AMMAN - JORDANIAN											
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607174											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 07/06/1997											
											
PAST 12 MONTHS	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	QTY.	NO. OF	NO. OF	VALU	OPEN	CLOSE	CHANGE		
PRICE				TRANS.	SHARES	TRADED	PRICE	PRICE			
269.00	213.00	ARAB BANK	11.0	1.56	16	740	109490	255.50	256.00	+.50	
N 2.340	1.680	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	8	0.00	63	24842	50761	2.06	2.02	-.04	
5.500	4.100	CHAIRO AMMAN BANK	11.4	2.73	3	3725	20481	5.50	5.50	-	
N 3.600	2.760	BANK OF JORDAN	6.5	0.00	3	580	1800	3.10	3.09	-.01	
1.210	.880	MID. EAST INV. BK.	63.7	0.00	1	250	243	.96	.97	+.01	
N 2.180	2.440	JOR. EDU. BANK	13.0	0.00	22	124819	36684	2.98	3.00	+.02	
1.050	.780	JOR. GULF BANK	4.8	8.44	10	42384	34297	.80	.81	+.01	
3.870	3.450	AMMAN SEC. INV. BK.	17.8	0.00	2	5300	19110	3.40	3.70	+.30	
4.950	3.480	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	14.0	3.30	10	4131	19110	3.10	3.73	+.63	
1.950	1.140	UNION BK. SAV. INV.	100.0	0.00	4	1000	1154	1.19	1.14	-.05	
3.600	3.000	JOR. INV. TR. BANK	20.1	0.00	1	250	780	3.14	3.12	-.02	
2.950	1.000	BEIT AL-HAL (BEITRA)	7	13.04	9	1950	2264	1.21	1.15	-.06	
1.440	1.000	PHILADEL. INV. BK.	9	0.00	1	2750	3025	1.12	1.10	-.02	
BANK SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 195.72 FCBI: +0.01 152 212721 725468											
2.660	1.850	YARMOUK INSUR.	9.8	8.11	1	200	370	1.85	1.85	-	
2.300	2.100	BOLY LAND INSUR.	6.5	0.00	2	236	519	2.30	2.20	-.10	
2.200	1.820	ARAB LIFE INSUR.	7.2	5.11	1	1000	1850	1.85	1.85	-	
3.100	2.660	KAYL. AMILA INSUR.	17.5	5.02	2	190	530	2.66	2.79	+.13	
6.170	1.700	ALWAZIR AL-ARABI	13.0	0.00	1	100	550	5.75	5.50	-.25	
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 115.06 FCBI: -0.01 7 1726 3819											
1.620	1.450	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	8.1	5.95	11	5083	8521	1.69	1.68	-.01	
1.540	1.280	LIBID ELECTRICITY	8.2	8.39	3	1032	1413	1.35	1.37	+.02	
2.780	2.440	EDUSE MINERALIA	13.6	5.78	2	180	403	2.64	2.70	+.06	
7.450	1.800	KUCH. AL-SHARAH PWD.	7.9	4.86	2	372	2478	1.15	1.20	+.05	
1.380	1.300	NATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	25	15376	20156	1.28	1.34	+.06	
1.220	1.560	JORD. EDUCATION	9	0.00	3	915	972	1.56	1.56	-	
2.230	1.630	UNITED CO.	8.0	6.85	5	900	1512	1.68	1.68	-	
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 122.31 FCBI: +0.06 53 23858 35788											
4.450	3.060	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	27.6	2.68	42	65127	267030	4.10	4.10	-	
4.140	2.710	JOR. PROSPERITY INDUS.	10.8	2.56	8	60200	156768	3.90	3.90	-	
7.050	4.950	ARAB POTASH CO.	15.4	3.03	12	16900	110249	6.75	6.60	-.15	
10.250	8.720	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	9.4	9.18	8	1340	13038	9.80	9.70	-.10	
2.470	1.700	WOOLLEN INDUSTRIES	11.0	7.87	3	375	476	1.25	1.27	+.02	
3.240	1.650	INDUSTRIAL COM. AM.	9	0.00	4	575	1128	1.97	1.97	-	
4.000	3.040	ARAB PHARM. IND.	10.5	5.26	12	4219	14057	3.85	3.80	-.05	
1.680	1.130	RAPIA INDUSTRIES	9	0.00	4	850	984	1.20	1.14	-.06	
5.540	4.250	DAR ALBAHAR INV. INV.	12.8	4.79	3	600	3127	5.25	5.22	-.03	
1.860	.650	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	10.0	0.00	4	6500	3315	.51	.51	-	
1.130	1.020	ARAB PAPER COV. TRD.	32.1	0.00	5	1130	1208	1.05	1.05	-	
1.450	.680	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	16	5250	3458	.68	.65	-.03	
8.500	2.130	NATL. CARB. VENT. FUND	43.2	0.00	6	2000	5400	2.73	2.70	-.03	
1.010	.970	JOR. SULPHUR CHEM.	9	0.00	40	54050	30008	.58	.56	-.02	
1.670	1.120	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	18.3	4.90	8	2050	2938	1.43	1.43	-	
2.540	2.410	UNIV. HOSP. TRD.	11.8	1.17	13	8150	11566	1.43	1.41	-.02	
1.800	1.120	JOR. INDUS. RESOURCES	15.2	8.85	19	8500	9605	1.12	1.13	+.01	
1.600	1.300	KALL. CHLORINE	13.9	4.76	7	2812	4137	1.49	1.47	-.02	
1.330	.840	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	15.9	0.00	8	2400	2106	.87	.87	-	
2.090	1.510	EL-SAY READY WEAR	54.2	0.00	6	1237	1912	1.57	1.54	-.03	
1.130	1.080	INTL. TOBACCO	6.3	0.00	13	5950	5670	1.14	1.16	+.02	
1.340	.860	UNION CH. & VEG.	40.9	0.00	6	1750	1575	.90	.90	-	
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 127.60 FCBI: -1.09 255 231985 652951											
GRAND TOTAL											
INDEX: 159.60 FCBI: -0.46 467 470290 1418023											
AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK OFFER AMMAN - JORDANIAN											
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607174											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 07/06/1997											
											
PAST 12 MONTHS	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	QTY.	NO. OF	NO. OF	VALU	OPEN	CLOSE	CHANGE		
PRICE				TRANS.	SHARES	TRADED	PRICE	PRICE			
.730	.410	JOR. TRADE FAC.	12.8	0.00	8	8250	3000	.48	.48	-	
.840	.660	UNION INV. SOC.	9	0.00	25	57444	10766	.68	.69	+.01	
.780	.370	ARAB FID. INVEST.	9	0.00	34	97300	51564	.52	.54	+.02	
N .950	.730	AL-SINAH TRD. 75	7	0.00	13	21917	11491	.82	.82	-	
N .950	.610	AL-DARITAN 75	62.4	0.00	12	8900	2324	.68	.68	-	
.620	.200	JOR. INDUS. INVEST. CO	9	0.00	11	18700	8331	.23	.23	-	
.780	.400	NATL. MEX. ENG. HAVICO	9	0.00	60	231600	143403	.23	.23	-	
N .950	.900	READY MIX CONCRETE	11.0	0.00	1	400	384	.94	.96	+.02	
.910	.710	JORDAN STEEL	12.8	0.00	7	8099	5982	.74	.74	-	
1.340	.860	UNION FOOD FACT.	37.5	0.00	22	14018	9139	.89	.93	+.04	
N .730	.550	KALL. PHARM. 05	25.9	0.00	5	4450	2398	.59	.59	-	
.600	.390	JORD. INV. TRD.	6	0.00	6	10450	4389	.42	.42	-	
N 1.000	.810	NAT. ALUMINIUM 75	9	0.00	5	1272	750	.85	.84	-.01	
N 1.020	.720	ARAB INV. FOOD FACT.	37.6	0.00	1	500	390	.74	.78	+.04	
.670	.530	MID. EAST COMPLEX	0.4	14.71	9	9230	6209	.67	.68	+.01	
		AMMAN FOOD INDUSTRY	9	0.00	7	72016	72016	1.74	1.90	+.16	
GRAND TOTAL											
239 561666 329760											
I : New 12 months high											
+ : New 12 months low											
N : Listed during the past 12 months											
P : P/E ratio is 100 or more											
+ : Negative P/E											
E : Earnings is zero or N/A for the most recent year											



Chicago Bulls' guard Michael Jordan (L) bumps Utah Jazz forward Byron Russell during the fourth period in game three of the NBA Finals in Salt Lake City. The Jazz won 104-93 to close the Bulls' 2-1 game lead in the best-of-seven series (Reuters photo)

Malone leads Jazz to victory, trail Chicago 2-1 in finals

SALT LAKE CITY (R) — The Mailman, Karl Malone, made a home delivery Friday as the Utah Jazz built a big lead and then held on down the scary stretch for a 104-93 win over the Chicago Bulls and a foothold in the NBA finals.

The NBA's most valuable player, performing at home after two defeats in Chicago and taunts of "MVP" every time Bulls favourite Michael Jordan was in the spotlight, scored 37 points and got 10 rebounds, three assists and four steals — and some "MVP" chants of his own.

"I think this team definitely feeds off what I do," said Malone.

"Karl came out rolling, made some nice shots to start the game and I think everybody got their heads up to start the game," said point guard John Stockton.

The NBA's all-time assists leader dished out a game-high 12 assists and, after a subpar first three quarters, wound up with 17 points — including Utah's last six lead-preserving points on clutch free throws.

Utah also got a welcome contribution off the bench from forward Greg Foster, who had 17 points to tie his career high. "I let the game come to me, and I'm having fun with this," said Foster.

Some games, Malone

said, you have a better feel for one or another of your frontline partners. "Tonight it was Greg. Greg allowed me to be more active and do more things," he said.

"He's not bashful either, he's not afraid to shoot."

Scottie Pippen had 27 points and Michael Jordan 26 as Chicago, which trailed by as many as 24 points in the third quarter, unleashed a barrage of steals and 3-pointers to come as close as five points at 100-95 with just over a half-minute to go.

"We'd have been foolish to think that they weren't going to make a run," said Stockton.

Utah coach Jerry Sloan said: "We were playing not to lose instead of continuing to play. Fortunately we had enough of a lead that we were able to bang on and make our free throws."

Games 4 and 5 of the best-of-seven series will also be in Salt Lake City.

"The biggest game of the series, I think, for us is Sunday," said Malone.

The Jazz still have not lost at home in these playoffs and have been defeated only once at the Delta Centre since the All-Star break, winning 22 in a row.

The Bulls, who came in 3-0 in finals Game 3's on the road, have never swept an NBA championship series.

They have also never lost a finals in four previous appearances.

Malone scored 32 points in the first half, 15 in the first quarter. He matched his game 2 output of 20 points with 4-13 left in the half.

"I was able to make an effort right off the bat to be more aggressive inside," said Malone.

Said Sloan: "I think Karl got off to a great start defensively. He was alive defensively. Usually when he's that way, he's in a rhythm to shoot the basketball."

"He just came ready to play," said Stockton. "He was very aggressive offensively, very aggressive defensively and everybody was able to feed off him."

Foster had 11 points in the second quarter for a half-time total of 15 as the Jazz stretched their lead to 18 points at 53-35 before closing the half ahead by 16, 61-45.

"I can tell you that the big guys whipped up on us tonight," said Chicago coach Phil Jackson. "Foster and Malone both did a great job out there. I thought the Jazz energy was terrific. They got out and ran early, they did the things they do that make them a great team."

In the first quarter, after six lead changes and two ties, a 3-point play by

Malone put the Jazz up for good at 14-11, and Utah gradually inched out to its biggest lead at the end of the period, 31-22.

Like Foster, Howard Easley, backing up Stockton at point guard, gave the Jazz a lift in the second quarter. On successive plays he assisted on a 3-point play by Foster and a bucket by Malone, then drew a foul and converted the free throws during an 8-2 Jazz run to end the half.

The Utah bench scored 18 of Utah's 30 points in the second period.

The Jazz went up by as many as 24 points in the third quarter but went dry, going 1-for-12 during one long 9-2 Chicago run, to finish the period leading by 17, 77-60. The Bulls charged back in the fourth quarter to draw within 90-83 with 2:52 left in the game, but the Jazz just held on, making 15-of-16 free throws in the quarter.

Pippen tied a finals record for most 3-pointers made with seven — four in the fourth quarter, when he scored 14 points and Jordan tallied 16 — and the Bulls tied a finals record for most 3-point attempts in a game with 32 — 14 in the final period.

Matthaeus sacked as Bayern captain

MUNICH, Germany (AFP) — Bayern Munich on Friday stripped Lothar Matthaeus of the club captaincy following the publication of a diary by the former German international in which he criticised his old Bayern team-mate Jurgen Klinsmann and national coach Berti Vogts.

Bayern said on Friday that Matthaeus was no longer captain "following a meeting with coach Giovanni Trapattoni."

Earlier news that Matthaeus had launched his much-talked about football diary in Munich caused a ripple of discussion among the German National Team as they left for a world cup qualifier in Ukraine.

"I was late coming down to eat and everyone was in a

great mood," Vogts said. "I had to ask around to find out why everyone was laughing. It was the diary."

Matthaeus has long held a grievance against Klinsmann, whom Matthaeus believes engineered his absence from Germany's Euro 96 squad last year.

"He was and still is intelligent, cowardly, egoistical and thinks only about money," he told the Munchner Abendzeitung on Tuesday.

"I know without a shadow of a doubt he contributed to me losing my place in the national side," he added.

Klinsmann, who took over as national captain from Matthaeus, has left for Italian side Sampdoria after claiming he could not fit in at Bayern.

Shawn Kemp not returning to Sonics

SEATTLE (R) — Disgruntled Seattle Supersonics All-Star forward Shawn Kemp said that he would never play for the team again.

"It's been so negative there in the city over the last couple of years, it would be impossible for me to be in that situation again," Kemp said in an interview with cable sports network ESPN.

"I would never let myself go back there to play another 82-game season in Seattle," he insisted.

Kemp, 27, who helped Seattle reach the NBA finals last year, made \$3.3 million this season and was upset with his salary situation all year.

He sat out three weeks before reporting to training camp and missed or was late for a handful of practices and team trips, despite assurances of Sonics owner Barry Ackerley that his contract would be reconstructed as soon as possible.

On March 30, Kemp was taken out of the starting lineup for four games for missing a team flight and practice the previous day. He was also benched and fined by head coach George Karl for not informing the team he would miss an April 4 practice.

Karl said Kemp had to improve his level of professionalism.

"I found myself for the first time this season being unable to focus just because of the things that were happening around me," Kemp said. "I could never put myself in that position again."

Kemp averaged 18.7 points and 10 rebounds in 81 games for Seattle, which won the Pacific Division with a 57-25 record, but was eliminated in seven games by Houston in the Conference semifinals.

Kemp completed the second year of a seven-year contract extension, which calls for a \$14.6 million balloon payment in the 2002-03 season. However, under rules of the collective bargaining agreement contracts cannot be renegotiated until the third year is complete, so Kemp has no legal recourse other than to wait until the end of the 1997-98 season.

Last Friday, the Seattle Post-Intelligencer reported Kemp's agent, Tony Dunt, contacted Sonics president Wally Walker just days after the team was eliminated from the playoffs and asked that his client be traded.

Women's Asian Handball Championship

Japan beat Uzbekistan, take on S. Korea today

By Roufan Nabhas and Khaled Harb
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Japan added two points after beating Uzbekistan 23-16 (8-10) in a heated match Saturday on the fourth day of the 6th Asian Women's Handball Championship currently underway at the Sports Palace.

Uzbekistan started strong from the beginning but the Japanese team was first to score.

The Japanese, depending on the fast movement of their strikers gave the Uzbek defence a hard time throughout the match.

Uzbekistan kept the pressure with fast and accurate passes to end the first half 10-8.

In the second half, the Japanese recovered from the Uzbek shock and worked more on their missed passes.

Japan's Tanaka, Kamido

and Kamiora established a vital trio and scored after turnovers to take a 21-14 lead.

Uzbekistan looked weak in the second half with more lost shots at the Japanese goal.

The Japanese coach was given a yellow card for interfering and shouting during the match.

Japan kept the pressure in the last remaining minutes and ended the match 23-16.

China still lead the standings with six points and a clean record and will meet the other unbeaten team, titleholders South Korea in a match considered to be a very powerful one.

South Korea with four points will meet Japan Sunday.

Also Sunday, Uzbekistan will have a tough match against Taipei.

Held under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Sumayya Bint Al

Hassan, the competition groups top teams including South Korea, Japan, China, Uzbekistan and Chinese Taipei.

Kazakhstan declined participation for financial reasons.

The top three teams in the competition will qualify for the World Championship due to be held in August in Germany.

While the Kingdom is hosting the event, the Jordanian team will not take part in the competition. However, the national team is expected to play some friendly matches against some of the visiting teams.

The championship is sponsored by the Asian Handball Federation.

Jordan Television is transmitting live coverage of the matches and there is free admittance to the matches as a step to encourage more people to watch the game.

Schedule of matches (At 4:30 p.m. and 6:15 p.m.)

Sunday, June 8: Japan vs. South Korea
Monday, June 9: Taipei vs. Uzbekistan
Tuesday, June 10: China vs. South Korea

Standings

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
China	2	2	0	0	88	55	6
South Korea	2	2	0	0	86	26	4
Japan	2	2	0	0	70	55	4
Uzbekistan	2	2	0	0	53	93	-
Taipei	2	2	0	0	34	102	-



Los Angeles Dodgers' second baseman Nelson Liriano jumps over St. Louis Cardinals' Delino DeShields to complete the double play on Cardinals' Willie McGee in the first inning in Los Angeles (Reuters photo)

American League				National League			
Cleveland	7	Boston	3	Cincinnati	5	Ny Mets	2
Seattle	6	Detroit	3	Montreal	3	Chi Cubs	0
NY Yankees	6	Milwaukee	3	Pittsburgh	3	Philadelphia	4
Toronto	4	Oakland	1	St Louis	3	Los Angeles	1
White Sox	7	Baltimore	3	Houston	8	San Diego	7
Kansas City	2	Texas	1	Atlanta	9	S. Francisco	5
Minnesota	9	Anaheim	7	Florida At Colorado	Postponed-Rain		

Makinen and McRae clash in Acropolis Rally

ATHENS (R) — The duel between Tommi Makinen and Colin McRae resumes on Sunday as pressure mounts in the Acropolis Rally — one of the toughest rounds of the World Championship.

Finland's Makinen stormed to his third rally victory this year at Argentina in May, extending his lead at the top of the Drivers' Championship over McRae to six points. The Mitsubishi driver has been buoyed by the resilience of his lancer car during his last win on similar style roads, but differing conditions, to the Greek event. "The Lancer seems to be very competitive in all conditions and it has a good chance to score world championship points," Makinen said.

"We have proved in Argentina that the car is also really good on twisty roads, which will help a lot."

Subaru driver McRae is equally confident, saying it is Makinen's turn to suffer in a title race. A victory for McRae would equal Makinen's three wins this year, but both men are aware that this event will be tough on car and driver.

The rally has been moved forward from previous years and is likely to be even hotter than usual. As well as testing the stamina of the drivers, the dust and the roughness of the roads will highlight any car weaknesses.

"We've got the strongest car for sure so this is never something we are concerned about," McRae said. "The big difference is the fact that the ground is a lot harder, more compacted, which is tough on tyres as well as cars."

Ford driver Carlos Sainz from Spain, who won here in 1990 and 1994, is lying joint third in the Drivers' Championship, 14 behind McRae who has 32 and 20 behind Makinen. Sainz and will again be partnered by four-times World champion Juha Kankkunen. The rally begins on Sunday morning from the Acropolis for the first and longest leg of three. The cars head north beyond Kamena Vouria before the return dash to Athens, covering a total of 403 kilometres.

TODAY AT	CINEMA TEL:634144 PHILADELPHIA "1" Diane Keaton, Goldie Hawn & Bette Midler ... in THE FIRST WIVES CLUB Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	CINEMA TEL:634144 PHILADELPHIA "2" BALTO Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15 DANTE'S PEAK Shows: 8:30, 10:30	CINEMA TEL:699238 PLAZA Antonio Banderas... in TOO MUCH Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 101 DALMATIANS Show: 5:00 p.m. only	CINEMA TEL:677420 CONCORD CONCORD "1" Winner of 9 Oscars THE ENGLISH PATIENT Shows: 12:00, 3:00, 6:00, 9:00 CONCORD "2" Michael Jordan...in SPACEJAM Shows: 3:30, 6:00	Nabil & Risham's Theatre TEL: 625155 The actors are on annual leave The theatre will reopen July 2, 1997
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WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

Germany suffer take-off scare; Czechs meet Spain

PARIS (Agencies) — World Cup qualifying takes centre stage in the football world this weekend, with two of Europe's leading nations from last year facing crunch matches.

European champions Germany can overhaul the Ukraine at the top of Group 9 with victory in Kiev but the future for the team they beat in last year's Euro '96 final, the Czech Republic, looks much bleaker.

Having garnered just four points from four games so far, the Czechs travel to Group 6 leaders Spain knowing only victory is likely to keep alive their hopes of qualification for next year's finals in France.

Germany's trip to Kiev got off to a bad start when defective brakes on their Airbus A310 plane held up the team's departure on Friday.

The European champions finally got away from Frankfurt-Am-Main airport nearly two-and-a-half hours late after two take-off attempts had to be aborted and a damaged wheel replaced.

Little has gone right for the Czech Republic since they unexpectedly reached last year's European Championship final.

The exodus of star players abroad has also hampered the national squad's preparations, and for Sunday's game in Valladolid against Spain, the Czechs will be without four key players in Radek Bejbl, Patrik Berger, Pavel Kuka and Jan Suchoparek, all injured.

In Group 4 Scotland visit Belarus knowing victory will put them within sight of securing top spot.

Manchester United's Peter Schmeichel takes the captain's armband for Denmark's Group 1 clash with Bosnia in Copenhagen. The Danes, who top the group on goal difference from Greece, are without experienced forward Michael Laudrup, injured.

In the African Zone, Nigeria, Tunisia, Cameroon and Morocco could this weekend become the first countries to qualify for the finals.

Victory for Nigeria over Kenya in

Lagos would give them an unassailable lead in Group 1 while a draw will suffice for Group 2 pacesetters Tunisia away to Egypt.

Africa will have five representatives at the first 32-nation finals and the identity of the Group 3 winners will be known only after the final qualifying round in mid-August.

Nations Cup holders South Africa are slight favourites to win the group of death, but a Zambian victory in Johannesburg on Sunday would place them in the driving seat.

In South America, Argentina will hope to cement their qualification chances when they host Peru.

Surprise leaders Paraguay (23) aren't playing this weekend, while second-placed Colombia (17) visit Montevideo for a potentially explosive clash with Uruguay.

The Uruguayans will be desperate for the points — they are presently lying seventh, below three other teams by virtue of an inferior goal difference.

Asian World Cup qualifying at a glance

Three or four teams qualify. First round (group winners advance) (x-qualified for second round)

Group 1	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	PTS
x-S. Arabia	6	5	1	0	18	1	16
Malaysia	6	3	2	1	5	3	11
Taiwan	6	1	1	4	4	13	4
Bangladesh	6	1	0	5	4	14	3

Results
Saudi Arabia 2, Taiwan 0
Malaysia 2, Bangladesh 0
Taiwan 3, Bangladesh 1
Malaysia 0, Saudi Arabia 0
Bangladesh 1, Saudi Arabia 4
Malaysia 2, Taiwan 0
Taiwan 0, Malaysia 0
Saudi Arabia 3, Bangladesh 0
Bangladesh 2, Taiwan 1
Saudi Arabia 3, Malaysia 0
Malaysia 1, Bangladesh 0
Saudi Arabia 6, Taiwan 0

Group 2	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	PTS
TEAM	3	3	0	0	25	0	9
Iran	3	3	0	0	12	1	3
Syria	2	1	0	1	3	7	3
Kyrgyz	2	1	0	1	3	7	3
Maldives	3	0	0	3	0	32	0

Results
Iran 17, Maldives 0
Syria vs Kyrgyzstan, postponed
Iran 7, Kyrgyzstan 0
Syria 12, Maldives 0
Kyrgyzstan 3, maldives 0
Syria 0, Iran 1
Upcoming matches
Monday, June 9
Maldives vs Syria
Iran vs Kyrgyzstan
Wednesday, June 11
Kyrgyzstan vs Syria
Iran vs Maldives
Friday, June 13
Maldives vs Kyrgyzstan
Iran vs Syria

Group 3	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	PTS
x-UAE	4	3	1	0	7	1	10
Jordan	4	1	1	2	4	4	4
Bahrain	4	1	0	3	3	9	3

Results
Jordan 0, United Arab Emirates 0
Bahrain 1, United Arab Emirates 2
Bahrain 1, Jordan 0
Jordan 4, Bahrain 1
United Arab Emirates 3, Bahrain 0
United Arab Emirates 2, Jordan 0

Group 4	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	PTS
TEAM	3	3	0	0	17	0	9
Japan	3	2	0	1	5	1	6
Oman	3	0	1	2	1	15	1
Nepal	3	0	1	2	1	8	1

Results
Nepal 1, Macao 1
Oman 0, Japan 1
Japan 10, macao 0
Oman 1, Nepal 0
Japan 6, Nepal 0
Oman 4, Macao 0
Upcoming matches
Sunday, June 22
Nepal vs Oman
Japan vs Macao
Wednesday, June 25
Macao vs Oman
Japan vs Nepal
Saturday, June 28
Macao vs Nepal
Japan vs Oman

Group 5	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	PTS
TEAM	3	2	1	0	8	1	7
Uzbekistan	3	2	1	0	8	1	7
Yemen	4	2	1	1	8	1	7
Indonesia	4	1	3	0	10	2	6
Cambodia	5	0	1	4	1	23	1

Results
Indonesia 8, Cambodia 0
Indonesia 0, Yemen 0
Cambodia 0, Yemen 1
Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Cambodia 1, Indonesia 1
Yemen 0, Uzbekistan 1
Yemen 7, Cambodia 0
Uzbekistan 6, Cambodia 0
Indonesia 1, Uzbekistan 1
Upcoming matches

Friday, June 13
Yemen vs Indonesia
Friday, June 20
Uzbekistan vs Indonesia
Sunday, June 29
Cambodia vs Uzbekistan
Sunday, July 13
Uzbekistan vs Yemen

Group 6	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	PTS
TEAM	4	3	1	0	9	1	10
x-S. Korea	4	1	1	2	5	6	4
Thailand	4	1	0	4	3	10	3

Results
Hong Kong 0, South Korea 2
Thailand 1, South Korea 3
Thailand 2, Hong Kong 0
Hong Kong 3, Thailand 2
South Korea 4, Hong Kong 0
South Korea 0, Thailand 0

Group 7	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	PTS
TEAM	3	3	0	0	7	0	9
Kuwait	3	1	1	1	3	4	4
Lebanon	3	1	0	2	2	8	1

Results
Lebanon 1, Singapore 1
Singapore 0, Kuwait 1
Kuwait 2, Lebanon 0
Singapore 1, Lebanon 2
Kuwait 4, Singapore 0
Upcoming matches
Sunday, June 22
Lebanon vs Kuwait

Group 8	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	PTS
TEAM	4	4	0	0	9	2	12
China	4	3	0	1	10	2	9
Tajikistan	4	1	0	3	4	8	3
Turkmenistan	4	0	0	4	2	13	0

Results
Turkmenistan 1, China 4
Tajikistan 4, Vietnam 0
Tajikistan 0, China 1
Turkmenistan 2, Vietnam 1
Vietnam 1, China 3
Turkmenistan 1, Tajikistan 2
Vietnam 0, Tajikistan 4
China 1, Turkmenistan 0
Upcoming matches
Sunday, June 8
Vietnam vs Turkmenistan
China vs Tajikistan
Sunday, June 22
Tajikistan vs Turkmenistan
China vs Vietnam

Group 9	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	PTS
TEAM	2	2	0	0	5	1	6
Kazakhstan	2	1	0	1	7	4	3
Iraq	2	0	0	2	2	9	0

Results
Kazakhstan 3, Pakistan 0
Iraq 6, Pakistan 2
Iraq 1, Kazakhstan 2
Upcoming matches
Wednesday, June 11
Pakistan vs Kazakhstan
Iraq vs Pakistan
Sunday, June 29
Kazakhstan vs Iraq

Group 10	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	PTS
TEAM	3	3	0	0	14	0	9
x-Qatar	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
Sri Lanka	3	1	1	1	3	7	4
India	3	0	0	3	0	10	0

Results
Qatar 3, Sri Lanka 0
India 2, Philippines 0
Qatar 5, Philippines 0
Sri Lanka 1, India 1
Sri Lanka 3, Philippines 0
Qatar 6, India 0

Second round
single round-robin
two groups of 5
(winners, runners-up advance)
Third round
Two-leg playoff
Winners qualify
(losers enter playoff)
Loser's playoff
Winner enters two-leg playoff with Oceania winner for final berth

Majoli shatters Hingis' dream by winning French Open

PARIS (AFP) — Iva Majoli scored a major upset when she won the teenage battle for the women's singles title at the French Open here on Saturday scoring a shock 6-4, 6-2 victory on the Roland Garros centre-court over World No. 1 Martina Hingis.

The defeat shattered the Australian Open champion's dreams of a "Grand Slam" and also ended the 16-year-old Swiss player's unbeaten 37-match start to the season.

Hingis had been an overwhelming favourite to win the centenary women's crown but she was unable to mount a serious challenge against her ninth-seeded opponent, who was playing in her first-ever Grand Slam tournament final.

"I think I just played the match of my life," said an elated Majoli after Hingis' final backhand had slapped into the net.

"I'm so excited, I didn't even know where I was playing I was so concentrated. This is a dream come true."

Hingis, who had reached the final after a tumultuous three-set showdown with three-times champion Monica Seles on Thursday, failed to earn a single break point in the 78-minute final. By contrast the 19-year-old Croatian, watched by excited family, friends and adviser Goran Prpic in the players' box, had 17.

Majoli appeared completely unaffected by the big occasion and she went about her business as though it was just another match rather than the centenary final.

She kept Hingis permanently off-balance with the depth and power of her sledgehammer groundstrokes while her Swiss opponent's touch had clearly deserted her — especially when it came to landing drop-shots.

Hingis knew the game was up when she took a bathroom break and changed her shirt after going 2-3 down in the second set.

The 5ft 8in player from Zagreb, who reached a career-high fourth in the



Iva Majoli of Croatia in action during her match against Martina Hingis of Switzerland in the final of the French Open at Roland Garros stadium, June 7 (Reuters photo)



Martina Hingis of Switzerland during her match against Iva Majoli in the final of the French Open (Reuters photo)

rankings twelve months ago but who won only four games when she last faced Hingis at the Paris indoor open in February, continued to dictate the pace.

Hingis, the winner of six titles this season, admitted after the match that her service had let her down but she said: "We're good friends and I don't mind losing to her because she was better than me today."

"I was just happy to have got to the final. After my injury problems I set reaching the semifinals as my goal here."

Hingis played no tournaments in the run-up to Roland Garros after injuring her knee in a riding accident in April.

Majoli, who had been suffering from a bad cold and who needed medication before winning her three-set semifinal against Amanda Coetzer of South Africa, showed no ill effects from her marathon performances in the tournament.

Her four matches leading into the final all went three sets — and she spent over eleven hours on court before the final — compared to eight hours by Hingis.

Played in bright sunshine after a torrential rainstorm had swept the stadium in the morning, the packed crowd were able to watch a special ceremony to mark the centenary before the match.

Before the match hundreds of red, white and blue balloons were released into the sky and fans cheered a dozen former champions — among them Spain's Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario, Chris Evert of the United States, Virginia Ruzici of Romania, Australia's Evonne Coolidge, Britain's Shirley Bloomer and Christine Truman and the last French winner of the event — Francoise Durr, who triumphed in 1967.

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Army takes control over Sudan's national service

KHARTOUM (R) — The Sudanese army, under attack from rebels in the south and the east, is taking charge of the country's compulsory national service programme, previously in the hands of the paramilitary Popular Defence Forces.

From June 21 some 75,000 secondary school leavers will join six-week training courses at camps run by the armed forces, the government newspaper Al Anbaa said Friday, quoting Justice Minister Abdul Basit Sabdrat.

Enrolling for national service is a precondition for entry to universities, employment or travel abroad, the minister said.

"There will be no exceptions, whatever the situa-

tion," he added. Even the sick would have to enrol first and doctors at the camps would then decide whether they qualify for exemption.

The Islamist government introduced the Popular Defence Forces soon after it came to power through a military coup in 1989. Military service in Sudan had previously been voluntary.

The Popular Defence Forces, which ran similar compulsory six-week military training courses for school leavers, have been closely associated with the Islamist movement which runs Sudan in conjunction with the army.

Many graduates of the courses were posted to the war in southern Sudan,

where the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) has been fighting for greater regional autonomy.

The SPLA, in alliance with the smaller military forces of northern opposition groups, launched a big offensive in the south and east in January in the hope of sparking off a popular uprising in the capital Khartoum.

The offensive has made some progress but the two sides have recently given conflicting accounts of the military situation. The popular uprising did not materialise.

Mr. Sabdrat is head of a committee set up by President Omar Hassan Al Bashir last month to organise the new scheme.

American Jews dismayed by Israel's right wing rise

NEW YORK (AFP) — The rise of the Israeli right-wing religious parties is causing a rift with Jews in America who are beginning to redirect charity dollars that once flowed to Israel.

The millions of dollars in financial support from American Jews was once an essential part of Israel's strength, helping to build bridges, schools and resettling countless immigrants.

But as the right-wing Orthodox parties who helped Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu win a majority last year have increased their control over Israeli religious policies, American Jews have felt marginalised.

"As the issue of religious pluralism is played out here in the United States there are those who suggested they should stop giving to Israel," said Richard Wexler, president of the United Jewish Appeal, the umbrella organisation for charities that give to Israel.

Recently, San Francisco's Jewish community slashed \$1 million from donations to Israel, partly to protest the increasingly tight grip that the Orthodox parties have over religious affairs in Israel.

Mr. Wexler is worried that

other communities may soon follow suit.

The issue that has rankled American Jews more than any other since Mr. Netanyahu came to power is pending legislation over religious conversions.

The Orthodox parties are insisting that a long-held practice that gives the Orthodox branch of Judaism sole control over religious conversions be formally put into law.

The Orthodox movement already has exclusive jurisdiction over weddings and other religious rituals in Israel.

By formalising the conversion practice into law, the Orthodox have been purposefully trying to delegitimise other less strict forms of Judaism, namely the conservative and reform movements that roughly 80 per cent of American Jews identify with.

"I can only conclude that the conversion issue affects people very personally. They feel that their own beliefs are being devalued by the Jewish State," said Gil Kulick, a spokesman for the New Israel Fund, a Washington-based organisation that is pro-pluralism.

"I think the most difficult issues arise when American

Jews feel they are not accepted by Israel, or that their Jewish identity is not recognised," said Ami Nahson, the executive director of the Jewish community in California.

Last year, the United Jewish Appeal (UJA) raised \$720 million, 40 per cent of which went to Israel. In 1985, the UJA sent over 50 per cent of its money to Israel, but in recent years, American Jews have spent more on their own communities.

Surprisingly, the issue of religious pluralism has even eclipsed what was thought to be the much more contentious issue: The Arab-Israeli peace process.

Though polls show that American Jews overwhelmingly support the peace process, often more than 80 per cent, the Netanyahu government's reluctance to aggressively pursue peace has not diminished financial support.

"If one took the peace process issues as they affect the charitable giving alone, I don't know if there would be any difference," said Mr. Wexler.

"Our experience tells us that our donors can distinguish between the attitudes of a government and the needs of the Jewish people."

Russian premier meets Israel's Sharon, discusses gas deliveries

SOCHI (AP) — Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin met Friday with the visiting Israeli infrastructure minister, Ariel Sharon, focusing on plans to supply Russian natural gas to Israel.

Mr. Sharon, who arrived earlier in the week, flew for the meeting to Sochi, the Black Sea resort where Mr. Chernomyrdin is spending his vacation, the ITAR-TASS news agency said.

The two discussed economic and trade developments, possible cooperation in the sphere of aviation and the prospective gas deal, which Mr. Chernomyrdin termed "very interesting and mutually beneficial."

"We are getting into this region for the first time. At present, various options for

solving this problem are under discussion," he said.

Earlier Friday, Mr. Sharon discussed the plan in Moscow with Rem Vyakhirev, the head of Russia's natural gas monopoly Gazprom.

Mr. Sharon said after the talks with Mr. Vyakhirev that Israel wants to buy the best-quality Russian gas at the lowest possible price. But the negotiations, judging by the meeting, will not be easy, he noted.

Israel "needs firm guarantees that the gas supplies will be continuous for a long period," Mr. Sharon said, according to the Interfax news agency.

ITAR-TASS said Russian and Israeli experts will meet in Israel on July 7 to consider the terms of the deal. According to

Mr. Vyakhirev, a final decision might be taken by next fall.

If the sides reach an agreement on starting the deliveries in 2001, a new underwater gas pipeline from Turkey to Israel will be built, ITAR-TASS said.

Mr. Sharon said other topics of his visit to Russia include plans for direct purchases of Russian oil, which Israel buys on world markets, and Russia's possible participation in projects in Israel.

He mentioned sea water distillation projects and tenders to build roads and railroads and expand sea and airports, Interfax reported.

"Israel is totally open for cooperation with Russia and we will be glad to see Russian companies on our markets," Mr. Sharon said.

Compromise ends British lottery pay row

LONDON (R) — Executives from British lottery operator Camelot Group PLC agreed Friday to give some of their future bonuses to charity in a concession that ended a bitter row with the government.

The new Labour government expressed outrage last week when it emerged that bonus payments had inflated Camelot's wage bill by 40 per cent to 2.3 million pounds (\$3.7 million) while the sum the lottery raised for good causes fell. Chris Smith, the minister responsible for the lottery, said some of the bonuses should be handed to charity, but a number of Camelot executives

were reported to be on the verge of resigning over the row.

Under the compromise deal, Camelot's main executives agreed to contribute part of forthcoming long-term bonus entitlements to a joint charity fund. "It's not a question of giving in," Camelot Chairman Sir George Russell told Channel Four News. He said the executives agreed to the compromise to "help get Camelot going again, get the flak off everyone's back in the company."

Camelot itself will give to charity a sum equivalent to the one million pounds of bonuses paid to its directors in the last

financial year. Smith said in a statement: "I now regard the matter as closed and will press on with work to make the national lottery more a people's lottery." He said the government would publish next month details of plans to plough one billion pounds of lottery funds into health and education projects over the next five years. The money is expected to come from a midweek draw launched earlier this year.

The government will also outline its plans to give the lottery to a non-profit operator when Camelot's licence expires in 2001.



THE WEAPON THAT DOWNED 2 HELICOPTERS: Turkish officer displays a Russian made SA-7B land to air missile launcher captured from the Kurdish rebels on Friday. Turkish military spokesman General Erol Ozkaskan (rear) said Kurdish rebels had used sophisticated anti-aircraft missiles to shoot down two army helicopters on a mission in northern Iraq. This is the first time two of our helicopters have been shot down Gen. Ozkaskan told reporters (Photo by Reuters)

Turkish army accuses Erbakan of failing to finance Iraq campaign

ANKARA (AFP) — The Turkish army Friday accused Islamist Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan's government of failing to finance the military's ongoing incursion into northern Iraq to wipe out the bases of separatist Kurdish rebels.

"The northern Iraq operation is currently being supported by the normal budget of the armed forces," General Erol Ozkaskan,

armed forces secretary general, told reporters.

"We have repeatedly asked the prime ministry and the finance ministry to allocate fresh assets to finance the operation, but received nothing," Gen. Ozkaskan said.

"The operational expenses must be met by the government, otherwise the campaign will be adversely affected," he added.

The rift was the latest

between Erbakan's Islamist-led government and the pro-secular army, which have already been involved in a bitter row over creeping Islamisation.

There was no immediate reply by Mr. Erbakan to the military's accusation.

Analysts said the ongoing Turkish incursion into northern Iraq has cost the army more than \$100 million. More than 25,000 Turkish

troops, backed by tanks and air power, have been engaged in operations against the separatist Kurdistan Labour Party (PKK) in northern Iraq since May 14.

According to Turkish figures, more than 2,200 PKK rebels and 95 Turkish troops have been killed in fighting since then. The PKK says its losses are less than 100.

Irish ex-banker makes history by taking Sinn Fein into parliament

DUBLIN (R) — A dapper former banker made history on Saturday when he won a seat in Ireland's election to become the first member of Sinn Fein, political wing of the outlawed Irish Republican Army (IRA), to enter Ireland's parliament.

The victory by Caoimhghin O Caolain will reverberate beyond his border constituency of Cavan Monaghan and strengthen Sinn Fein's hand in Washington, Dublin and London in its battle to join Belfast talks on the future of Northern Ireland.

All three governments sent Sinn Fein into the wilderness in 1996 after its IRA guerrilla allies ended a 17-month ceasefire and bombed London in a renewed war to end British rule of Northern Ireland.

Unlike previous successful Sinn Fein candidates, who

refused to take up their seats, Mr. O Caolain plans to take part in parliamentary business.

With exit polls and initial counts predicting a hung parliament, support of smaller parties like Sinn Fein could be crucial for whatever government emerges in Dublin.

Sinn Fein shares the IRA's goals of merging Northern Ireland with the Irish Republic, but it remains barred from multi-party talks on the province's future because the IRA has not restored its ceasefire.

It says it is determined to end the 28-year conflict, which has claimed 3,200 lives, and says Mr. O Caolain was involved in the drive for peace. One of his main roles was lobbying U.S. opinion to win support for Sinn Fein's cause.

"Centrally involved in the development of Sinn Fein's

peace strategy, Councillor O Caolain is a key figure in the party's efforts to inform and involve both U.S. public opinion and the Washington administration in the search for a solution to the conflict in Ireland," Sinn Fein said in a statement.

Mr. O Caolain said his victory demonstrated a "clear acceptance and understanding of the central role Sinn Fein has played in an earnest endeavour to ensure that we have an inclusive peace process in place."

But in the deprived estates of Monaghan which provided the core of his support, Mr. O Caolain was elected as much for his promises to fight unemployment, win investment for the region and solve the day-to-day problems of local people as for his republican ideals.

"The issue of Northern

Ireland hardly arises at all," wrote an Irish Times reporter who accompanied him on the campaign trail. "In some doorways, women dressed in the council house uniform of baggy T-shirts and leggings bring up problems with rent allowances or defective windows."

Mr. O Caolain campaigned on three platforms — the struggle for peace in Northern Ireland, job creation and the fight against drugs and crime.

"Sinn Fein is a very vibrant and very important political force on the ground here in Cavan Monaghan," he said. "We are very much at the coal face of local politics in this border constituency."

Married with four children, Mr. O Caolain left banking in the 1980s to become a county councillor and community activist.

Defence argues against death penalty for American bomber

DENVER (R) — Attorneys for convicted Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh pleaded for his life Friday, saying he was not a monster but a misguided former soldier who thought the government was waging war on the American people.

Appealing to the jurors who will decide if Mr. McVeigh is sentenced to death or life in prison, defence attorney Richard Burr asked them to put aside their emotional response to days of poignant and painful stories from bombing victims.

He said he would present testimony from about two dozen of Mr. McVeigh's former teachers, army buddies, co-workers, bosses and his father William. The testimony is expected to end next week.

"They will help you come to understand the reality of Timothy McVeigh," said Mr. Burr, who specialises in death penalty cases. "You will begin...to see him for a

person who could be your brother, your son, your grandson."

Mr. McVeigh was convicted Monday of murder and conspiracy charges in the April 19, 1995 bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building, an attack that killed 168 people and wounded more than 500 others.

As he has throughout his trial, Mr. McVeigh showed little emotion but appeared touched when a former neighbour, one of the first defence witnesses, burst into tears as he testified. The seven men and five women on the jury watched intently.

During this phase of the trial, the jury will decide between a sentence of death or life in prison. The prosecution rested its case Friday morning after testimony from 38 bombing survivors, rescuers, and those who lost loved ones.

The defence attorney told jurors: "There's also a person at the centre who you

will not be able to dismiss as a monster or a demon, but who could be your son, your brother, your grandson."

"We believe...you will come to the conclusion that the right response is a life sentence," he said.

He said Mr. McVeigh was enraged by the government's 1993 fiery siege at the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas, where some 80 people died. Waco became a rallying cry for right-wing extremists who felt federal agents provoked the tragedy and the U.S. government violated the Branch Davidians' rights.

"The fire of Waco did keep burning in McVeigh," said Mr. Burr, noting Mr. McVeigh travelled to Waco during the 51-day siege.

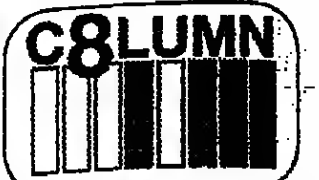
Reading Soldier of Fortune magazine and watching amateur videos about Waco, Mr. McVeigh came to believe "the government had declared war on the American people," he

said. "He felt the government assumed responsibility for the lives that were snuffed out that day," Mr. Burr said.

Mr. Burr also offered a description of Mr. McVeigh's past, calling him a serious-minded student who was socially awkward and who wanted intimate relationships with women but "had a hard time finding it." He said too that Mr. McVeigh was a gun enthusiast who worried about the impact of gun-control legislation.

Legal observers said the defence has a daunting task in trying to keep Mr. McVeigh off death row.

"No juror can vote for life in the face of such poignant testimony from victims," said local attorney Scott Robinson, who has followed the case closely. "Timothy McVeigh has no chance of escaping a sentence of death from this jury."



Fire-eating stripper sets himself on fire

LONDON (AFP) — A fire-eating male stripper was taken to hospital with burns after setting his hair alight during his act at a ladies' night, police said Saturday. "Fire eating and stripping perhaps don't mix," said a police spokesman. "His act involved fire and as he spat some out, it set his hair on fire — he then went off stage, doused his hair down, came back on and finished his act before he realised he was badly injured." The spokesman said exotic dancer Paul Westhead, 25, of Sheffield, South Yorkshire, in the north of England, had suffered 60 per cent burns to his head. His condition was said to be "stable."

Man survives six-storey jump in Bahrain but kills his saviour

MANAMA (AFP) — A man jumped out of a sixth floor window of an apartment block in Manama and survived — but killed a Bahraini man sleeping below, the local press reported Saturday. The victim, a 55-year-old Bahraini car washer, died in hospital of internal haemorrhaging. The man who jumped, a 33-year-old Gulf Arab, was taken to hospital with various injuries.

Hong Kong adopts comic approach to lesbianism

HONG KONG (AFP) — Hong Kong authorities on Thursday published a comic book on sexual orientation to stress equal opportunities. Free copies of the booklet will be distributed to homosexual groups, secondary schools, tertiary educational institutions, public libraries, and employers' and community organisations.

"It states that apart from their sexual orientation, bisexuals, lesbians and gays are the same as any other members of the community," a spokesman for the home affairs branch said. The 24-page comic book, "stresses that all human beings are born equal with inherent rights that all should be free to enjoy. Until recently homosexuality was outlawed in Hong Kong."

Married with four children, Mr. O Caolain left banking in the 1980s to become a county councillor and community activist.

Actor Charlie Sheen pleads no-contest to battery

LOS ANGELES (R) — Actor Charlie Sheen was given a one-year suspended prison sentence and put on probation for two years Friday after pleading no-contest to a charge of battery for an attack on his girlfriend. Judge Lawrence Mira also ordered the star of "Platoon," "Wall Street" and "Hot Shots" to pay \$2,800 in fines and restitution, perform 300 hours of community service, and attend eight counselling sessions. In addition, Sheen was ordered to stay away from Brittany Ashland, who alleged the actor knocked her to the ground of his home during an argument last Dec. 20. The woman, who Sheen's lawyer Donald Re asserted is an actress in pornographic films, has an outstanding civil suit against Sheen in which she is seeking damages for assault, battery, negligence, false imprisonment and emotional distress. "You will not see me back in this courtroom," Sheen told the judge, who replied: "Not unless I order you."